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DRESS AND MARRIAGE

Following fashion back to the Fifties for the big day
Iain R. Webb, page 13

HOLLYWOOD

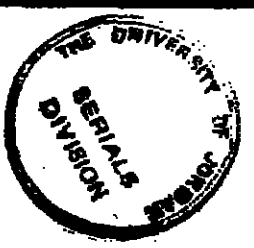
Write a script and win a Hollywood trip
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THE GIANT KILLER

Anne Simpson today is taking on the might of British Gas, p12

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THE TIMES



No. 65,281

WEDNESDAY MAY 31 1995

Warning to Bosnian Serb leaders

Major fears all-out war in Balkans

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

JOHN MAJOR will today respond to growing concern about Britain's involvement in Bosnia with a warning that the risk of a full-scale Balkan war would increase if the UN pulled out.

MPs and peers are being recalled to Westminster to discuss the crisis today, and Mr Major is expected to use his speech to reject claims that Britain has no strategic interest in the conflict.

As the first batch of up to 6,500 reinforcements headed for Bosnia yesterday, Mr Major warned Bosnian Serb leaders that they would be held personally responsible for the fate of 33 British hostages—a hint that they might be tried as war criminals if any of the 33 captives were harmed.

The Prime Minister is expected to emphasise today that the 4,000 men of the 24 Air Mobile Brigade likely to go to Bosnia shortly will have as their overriding priority the protection of the 3,400 British troops already there.

The Government's approach will be backed by Labour and Liberal Democrat leaders, but there were signs yesterday of increasing unease among Tory MPs. Sir George Galloway, chairman of the rightwing 92 Group, said he supported reinforcements for British troops in Bosnia "as a prelude to securing their safe withdrawal". He said: "No British interest is served by committing our forces as active participants in this civil war, and they should be brought home as soon as is safely possible."

The former Defence Minister Alan Clark said the Government could be getting into a "pre-Vietnam" situation. It was right to act to protect aid workers, but it would be very dangerous to consider mounting any offensive against the Serbs, he said.

Mr Major will nevertheless defend the continued involvement of British troops in a speech which will reflect the

Russian backing for West's stance

Russia agreed last night to give its full backing to efforts to find a peace deal in Bosnia and to reinforce United Nations troops, a week after it had expressed its anger at the decision to mount Nato air strikes on Bosnian Serb targets (Michael Evans writes).

A meeting of the five-nation Contact Group in The Hague last night broke up after five hours and officials were confident that Moscow was now back on side with the West. The Foreign Ministers from America, Britain, Germany, France and Russia, condemned the treatment by the Serbs of UN peacekeepers and agreed to provide extra protection for the troops. Andrei Kozirev, the Russian Foreign Minister, said he was pleased at the outcome.

Clinton offer, page 10
Simon Jenkins, page 14
Leading article, page 15

fear that if the UN were forced out, a wider conflict might develop, involving Albania, Macedonia, Greece and Turkey, with grave implications for the rest of the world.

Mr Major spoke with passion Britain's role at a Downing Street press conference yesterday, when he declared: "I sent out troops to Bosnia and I intend to do everything in my power to ensure that our soldiers are released unharmed." Their capture was not only an outrage, but a self-defeating folly that was taking the Serbs "down the path to total international isolation and permanent pariah status".

He said: "My own view has always been that so long as the United Nations troops, including the British contingent, can carry out their humanitarian

mission without unacceptable risk to their lives, then they should continue to carry out that mission. Neither do I agree with those who say that the West has no strategic interest in this conflict. The prevention of a full-scale Balkan war is very much a strategic interest for those of us in the West."

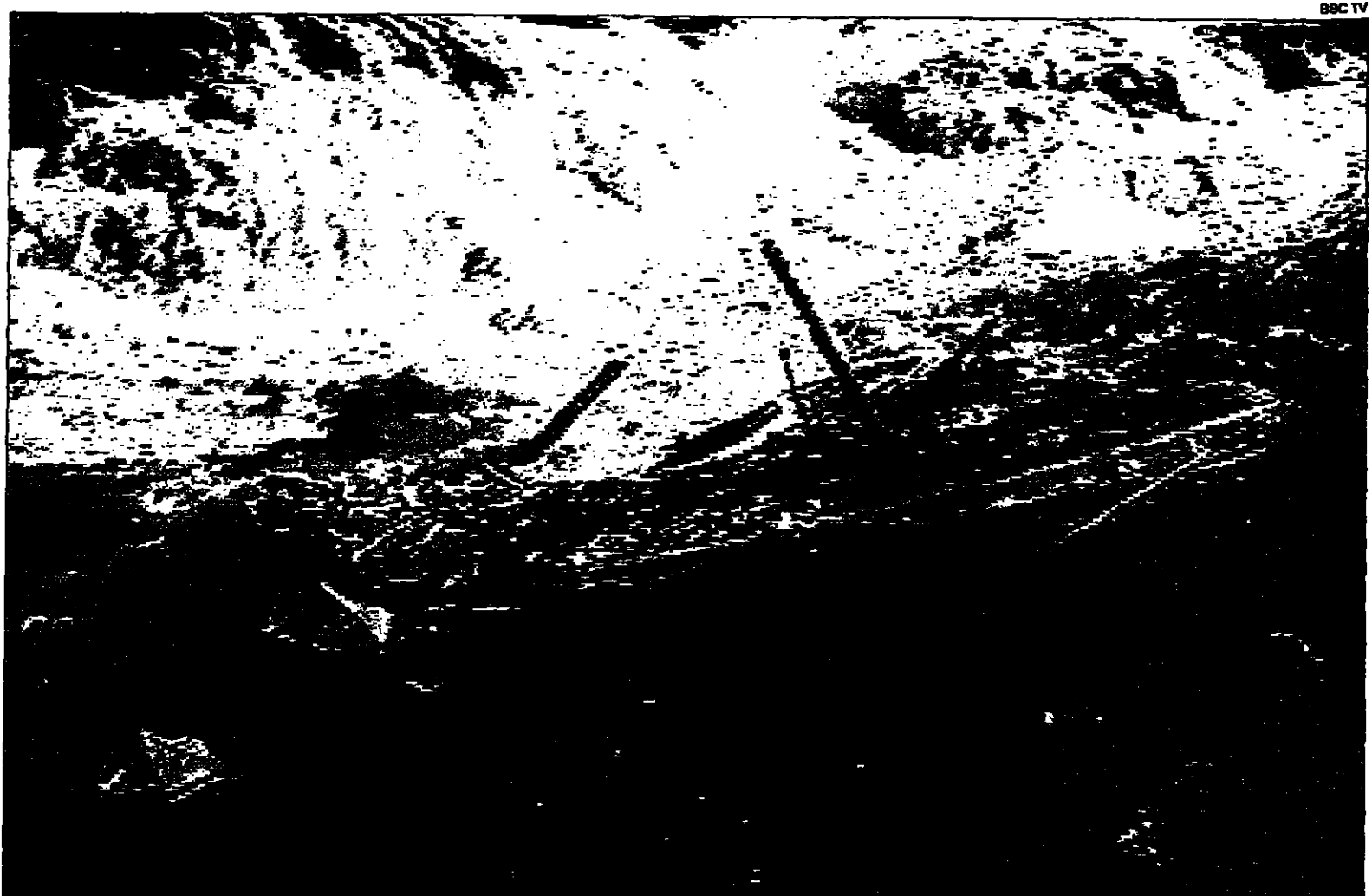
If the UN were forced out, Nato, the EU and the international community would all be losers. "But the greatest loss of all would be in former Yugoslavia itself where Serbs, Croats and Muslims would face a future ruled even more by violence and insecurity than they have faced in the last couple of years."

Mr Major added that even if the UN eventually had to leave, the West would not be able to wash its hands of the affair. That was an "utterly false delusion." And he disagreed that the public mood was in favour of the withdrawal of British troops.

Mr Major said a personal message had been sent to Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader and his military commander, General Ratko Mladic, warning them that they were responsible for the safety of British troops in their hands.

Tony Blair backed Mr Major's line yesterday, saying that the Serbs' hostage-taking was an intolerable challenge to international law. Speaking in Bonn, he said the Bosnian Serbs must be made to understand the international outrage at this act of terrorism.

Mr Blair supported the Government's actions in sending more troops to Bosnia, and made clear that he would also support a withdrawal if local commanders advised the risk to forces was unacceptable. "But there is no question of us putting forward the notion of withdrawal in response to the taking of hostages. If anything, it should lead us to an even tougher enforcement of the UN mandate."



The Maria Asumpta breaks up into matchwood beneath the cliffs after hitting the rocks at the entrance to Padstow harbour yesterday

Three die as sail training ship goes down

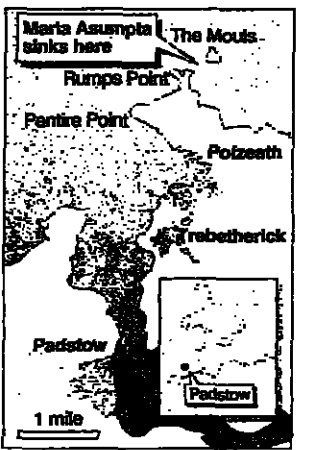
By Kathryn Knight, Edward Gorman and Dominic Kennedy

ONE crew member was killed and two were missing, feared dead, last night after the world's oldest operational sailing ship was wrecked off the north Cornwall coast after its engine was believed to have failed.

The 125ft brig *Maria Asumpta*, a wooden square-rigged sail training ship, was awaiting a pilot to escort her 14-strong crew into Padstow harbour when she struck rocks between the jagged Pentire Point and The Moulds.

Aground and without power, the 137-year-old vessel was left helpless and, despite only Force 4 winds, was dashed against the rocks. A Mayday message was issued as the crew were forced to abandon ship and take to lifeboats.

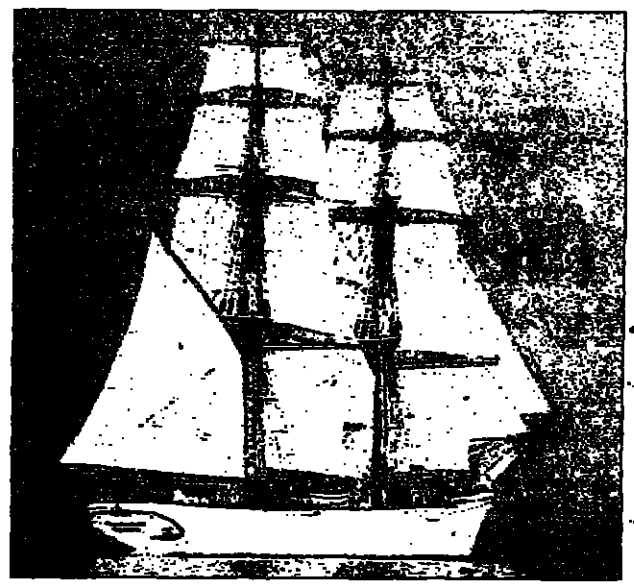
Six survivors managed to scramble ashore and climbed a cliff to safety as the vessel was reduced to matchwood below. Five others were rescued by the fishing vessel *Ellen Claire* and one body, that of a man aged about 50, was recovered from the water by a Royal Navy Sea King



helicopter from Cuddeon. The survivors were taken to Trillick hospital in Truro where they were treated for shock and hypothermia. Two were believed to be in a serious condition.

Fishing boats joined lifeboats from Padstow. Port Isaac and Rock searching the 12C waters for the missing two crew. Experts said people could be expected to survive for an average of only two hours in such temperatures.

The *Maria Asumpta*, manned by a volunteer crew from The Friends of Maria



Former glory: she was built near Barcelona in 1858

Survivors are freed from quake rubble

Rescue workers battled yesterday to free dozens of people still alive under the rubble of Sunday's earthquake on Sakhalin island in the Russian Far East. Although the death toll is still expected to exceed 2,000, officials in the oil town of Neftegorsk said that 32 survivors had been detected after mechanical work was stopped and rescuers shouted down into the ruins. The rescue of a child from the rubble brought brief cheer to relentless scenes of grief and suffering. Page 9.

Tight Irish security for Prince's visit

SECURITY for the Prince of Wales on his historic visit to the Irish Republic today was tightened even further yesterday after an incendiary device exploded in a bookshop in Dublin. Nobody was injured.

Police were called when staff found the device in a basket in the toy department of Eason's bookshop in O'Connell Street. The store was evacuated after a warning call, and staff put out a small fire with extinguishers. A Garda spokesman said that the fire-bomb had been a crude device.

In a second, incident, security forces were alerted after two barrels, one containing inflammable fuel and an incendiary device, were found at Clonsilla Castle in Co Sligo, the former holiday home of Earl Mountbatten, murdered nearby by the IRA in 1979. An Irish Army spokesman said that one barrel contained a device that would have caused a fireball had it ignited.

The Prince's Office said last night that he had no plans to visit the site of his grandfather's death. He will arrive

Pope calls for Orthodox unity

The Pope called yesterday for unity between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches before the end of the millennium, seeking an end to nearly ten centuries of division. In an encyclical that took both his own and the Orthodox churches by surprise, the Pope said "full unity in legitimate diversity" was his purpose. Page 5

Strike closes 230 Barclays branches

At least 230 Barclays Bank branches were closed yesterday by a clerical staff strike. Unions said that more than 1,000 of 2,064 branches were disrupted by the first national strike in Barclays history. The bank said that it shut 230, small branches for security reasons. Page 2

Doctor's win

A Cornish hospital that sacked a consultant for being bossy and rude admitted yesterday that she was dismissed unfairly more than two years ago. All complaints against Dr Helena Daly were withdrawn. Page 3

Hoover sold after free flights fiasco

BY COLIN NARBROUGH

HOOVER, the household appliance company, has been sold for a knockdown price by its American owner after its ill fated "free flights" promotion that has cost it £48 million.

Maytag, the parent company, said yesterday that it had decided to sell the European business to Candy, the privately-owned Italian home appliances group, for £106 million. The announcement came a day after it was disclosed that Hoover, which is based in Merthyr Tydfil, had failed in its attempt to stop a mass legal action over its disastrous promotion.

A judge in St Helens, Mer-



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Greece	1.00	Italy	1.00	Lira 3,000
Japan	1.00	Netherlands	1.00	Fl 4.00
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Lyell faces questions in the Commons over Levitt fraud sentence



Sir Nicholas: questions

BY NIGEL WILLIAMSON
WHITEHALL CORRESPONDENT

SIR NICHOLAS LYLELL, the Attorney-General, is facing demands from Labour and the Liberal Democrats for a "full explanation" following allegations that he misled the Commons over the trial of Roger Levitt, the fraudulent financial adviser.

John Morris, Shadow Attorney-General, is to write to Sir Nicholas asking how much he knew about the bargaining which led to Levitt, who was widely expected to go to prison, being sentenced to 180 hours' community service.

Alan Beith, the Liberal Democrat home affairs spokesman, called for a Commons statement and the opportunity for MPs to question Sir Nicholas over statements he made to the House in December 1993 in which he said that the Crown had not been involved in any plea bargaining and that the Serious Fraud Office was not aware in advance Levitt would receive a non-custodial sentence. Mr Beith said: "This was a very serious case in which the public was expecting a tough sentence. We need to know whether the Attorney-General was misinformed or misled the House."

Official court documents recently released show that there had been plea bargaining between counsel for the SFO and Levitt, who was originally charged with 62 counts of fraud after his financial empire collapsed with debts of £34 million. They also show the Crown had been told by the trial judge several days before sentence that on the basis of the plea anticipated by the Crown, he would not be sending Levitt to jail.

The transcript of a meeting in chambers on November 22 1993 between Mr Justice Laws, Jonathan Goldberg QC, for Levitt, and David Cocks, for the Crown, records the trial judge as saying: "On the specific basis of the prospective plea outlined to me — namely that there will be an admission of the deceptions of Fimbra but no admission of any other parts of the case — I would not pass an immediate prison sentence."

Four days later Levitt was sentenced to 180 hours' community service after pleading guilty to the lesser charge of deceiving Fimbra, the City regulator, while other charges of falsifying accounts were dropped. A public outcry followed and on December 9 1993 Sir Nicholas told MPs: "The SFO was not aware that the judge would impose a non-custodial sentence when it informed the defence that the proposed plea of guilty by Roger Levitt was acceptable."

The Attorney-General's office yesterday repeated those words, adding: "Sentencing is a matter for a judge. The prosecution can never change its mind about accepting a plea on the grounds that a sentence is too lenient." SFO sources continue to insist that even on the lesser charge

they had expected Levitt to get a two year sentence.

Paul Boateng, Labour's legal affairs spokesman, said: "If the Attorney-General didn't know what was happening, why didn't he? If he wasn't guarding the public interest in this case, who was? Sir Nicholas has some explaining to do."

John Perry, Levitt's solicitor, said yesterday: "What I find bizarre is that I wrote to Roger on November 5 1993 setting out the overtures we had received from the prosecution and a month later Parliament is being told there had been no such offer."

It is puzzling the prosecution appears to be embarrassed that they entered into any plea bargaining. It goes on... as they know well."



Levitt: spared jail

"This was a revolt by moderate people after years of bullying"

Hundreds of banks closed as Barclays staff strike over pay

BY ANNE ASHWORTH

MORE than 200 branches of Barclays Bank were closed yesterday because of strike action by clerical staff.

Banking unions claimed that more than 1,000 of the bank's 2,064 branches had been disrupted by the first national strike in its history. Barclays said that 230 small branches were closed but only because it had decided to shut them for security reasons.

Staff were protesting over the bank's 2.75 per cent pay settlement. Barclays may face further action from clerical workers and from managers.

Support for the strike was strongest on Merseyside, with 90 per cent of branches in Liverpool affected. Little business was done at the Barclaycard centres at Wavertree and Kirkby, where only seven out of 350 staff arrived for work.

The Union for Barclays Staff, known as Unifi, called the strike over its demand for a pay rise of 5 per cent or minimum £600 a year and was backed by the Banking Insurance and Finance Union.

Paul Snowball, Unifi general secretary, said: "The strike was very successful. It was

very clear that more people took part in the strike than voted for it.

"Virtually everyone who took part yesterday had never been on strike before. There was nervousness. There was apprehension. Many people preferred to stay at home rather than stand on the picket lines. This was a revolt by moderate people after years of bullying by Barclays."

Customers were asked by strikers to use other banks' cash machines. Those who did so will pay a charge only if they used TSB or Link network automatic tellers, where a charge of 1.5 per cent — minimum £1.50 — is payable. Mr Snowball said: "The feedback we get is that they want Barclays staff to get a fair deal."

A number of Essex branches were forced to shut and, in southeast London, the Charlton, Plumstead and Westcombe Park branches were closed. Union officials reported that Balham, Tooting and Wandsworth in southwest London were badly hit. Normal running of branches was also interrupted at locations

including Bowness in Cumbria, Blackpool, Brighton and Bristol. The effects were less marked in central London, although there were pickets at head office in Lombard Street in the City and also at the major branches in Pall Mall and the Strand.

Barclays said it had no plans to reopen pay negotiations and that the settlement, boosted by a 7.5% profit-sharing bonus, was "fair and competitive". A spokesman said: "We are pleased that so many of our staff decided to work normally, but not surprised by the relatively low response to the strike call because fewer than one in six of union members actually voted in favour of strike action."

Barclays may now have to prepare for further workplace disruption, with the possibility that its managers may be balloted on strike action. Negotiations over managers' pay is separate from clerical pay bargaining.

Unifi officials meet tomorrow to discuss the possibility of a further day of action for clerical workers.



Officials of the Banking Insurance and Finance Union outside Barclays City HQ

Pickets tell how disparity drove them on to street

BY MARIANNE DARCH
AND KATHRYN KNIGHT

THE unusual sight of picketing bank workers greeted many customers arriving at Barclays branches around the country yesterday. Many customers voiced support for the strikers and some turned away in a gesture of support.

The strikers said they did not want to alienate customers and aimed to improve services as well as gain a higher pay

increase. However, the main momentum behind the stoppage — the first in eighty years — is anger at what clerical workers consider an insulting disparity between senior staff and banking clerks.

At the Queensway branch in west London, where a third of staff went on strike, Michele Bromham, a senior account executive at the branch, distributed leaflets urging customers to boycott the bank for one day only. "We just want to

be treated fairly," she said. Brenda Kelly, London officer of Bifu, was one of five union officials bearing protest banners in Pall Mall. "Bank staff members are not traditional picketers. They are mild people who do not want this sort of thing, but many staff members who support the strike stayed at home instead of joining in the protest, which shows how strongly some feel."

One striker who has worked for the bank for five years said: "I would not normally be the sort of person who stands waving a placard but this pay deal is the rod that has broken the camel's back."

"The bank's offer of 2.75 per cent will make minimal difference to my salary. It is frankly insulting when you place it next to the 18.5 per cent further up the hierarchy. I am appalled by the mentality of imposing such vastly differing increases, especially following

on from the British Gas fiasco. It feels like a them and us situation and it does not make for happy workers."

Another worker who joined as a school leaver three years ago at 16 said: "I enjoy my job and feel uncomfortable about striking, but I find it insulting that we are supposed to just lie down and accept a measly percentage. Abdullah Ahmad, 58, a Malaysian businessman who has banked at Barclays for thirty years, said: "I

definitely support the strikers. The bank makes too much money and charges for everything. It should be passed on a bit, it's only fair."

However, Rupert Patrick, 19, a sales operator, said that bank profits should not affect staff salaries. "If they decided to work a set rate they should stick to it. I can understand them being angry if their pay rise is below the rate of inflation, but profits are after all for the good of a company."

Britain 'cut from history'

BY BEN PRESTON, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

EXAMINATION boards will soon be free to offer GCSE history courses without any coverage of British or European history, a pressure group claimed yesterday.

The History Curriculum Association said that new examination criteria published by School Curriculum and Assessment Authority could allow syllabuses to be composed entirely of non-European and international history. Chris McGovern, a

preparatory school history teacher and former Government adviser, claimed that the new criteria would require history courses starting in September next year to be taught and examined within a "politically correct" framework that would cover social and cultural perspectives as well as "technological, scientific, religious and aesthetic" perspectives.

The claims were rejected by the curriculum authority.

Tony Mills, a senior official, said it was difficult to envisage any examination board trying to construct a syllabus without British and European history. He said: "While it might be possible, technically, the chances of it happening are negligible."

Even if a board decided that it might be commercially viable to go ahead with such a syllabus, the authority could refuse to approve the course, he said.

Sail training ship sinks

Continued from page 1

far into Port Quin Bay and was making very little headway. She was blown by the wind and the tide and she went onto the rocks. She stayed upright for only 20 or 30 seconds and then she was hit by the swell and knocked one way and then another. It was only a few minutes before she broke up into matchwood. It was horrible to watch but it was inevitable because she was too far into the bay."

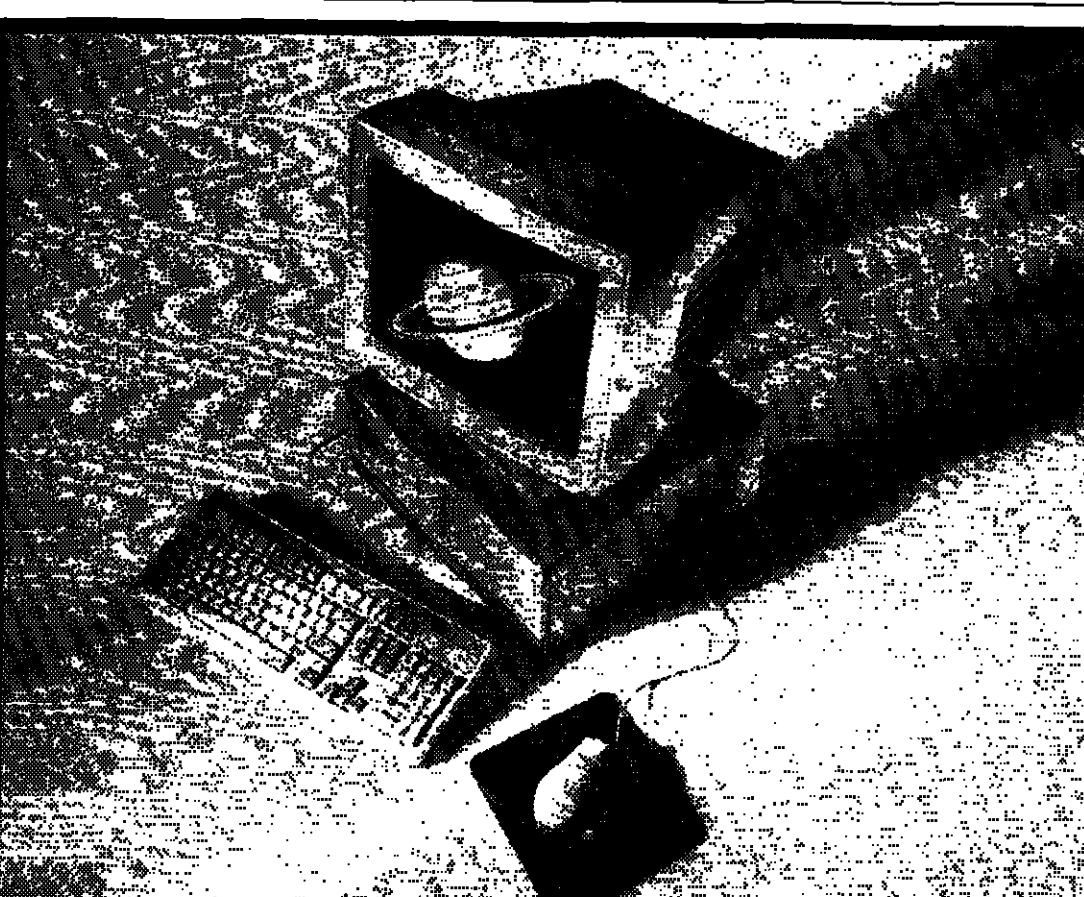
Dennis Skillcorn, who reports on yachting for BBC

Radio Solent in Southampton and who had recently been on board the ship, said that at the time it was in a "decrepit state" and there was clearly a lack of funds to keep her sound.

The *Maria Asumpta* was built in Spain in 1858 and originally operated the transatlantic trade routes. She was built near Barcelona and was restored to her former glory in the early 1980s. She has starred in the film *The Master of Ballenrae* and has also been used in promotional work. She has been on

fundraising functions to help with her maintenance. She was due to sail to Padstow for the summer but was being visited to the shipyard.

Sally, a local resident, said: "I was on security duty when the ship was being visited, but it was a very sad reminder of the hazards of this coast."



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NEWS IN BRIEF

Vote for state grants defies student leaders

Student leaders lost their fight yesterday to persuade the National Union of Students to abandon its historic commitment to state grants. Delegates at a conference in Derby narrowly rejected a call by Jim Murphy, the president, for a more "realistic" strategy accepting that the Government could not afford to restore grants to 1979 levels.

Instead, the conference backed left-wing calls for the union to continue the fight for a return to total state funding. Mr Murphy said he was disappointed that "emotion prevailed" in the debate. But he added that a policy review examining various alternatives would continue.

Patient's throat torn

The family of a 76-year-old woman whose throat and gullet were torn during a routine endoscopy examination have been told by doctors that she has only a few days to live. King's Mill Hospital in Nottinghamshire has apologised to the family of Irwen Bramley, from Derbyshire, for their distress. Mrs Bramley suffered internal injuries and was taken to Nottingham City Hospital for emergency surgery, where she developed kidney failure.

Lawyer defies QC oath

A Belfast barrister launched a legal challenge yesterday to the mandatory oath of allegiance to the Queen required to become a Queen's Counsel in Northern Ireland. Lawyers for Philip Magee lodged papers at the Belfast High Court seeking leave for a judicial review of the oath. Mr Magee, 44, says the oath discriminates on the grounds of religious belief or political opinion against those who are not members of Northern Ireland's majority political tradition.

Police do MoT tests

Thames Valley Police hope to make £20,000 a year by carrying out MoT tests for private motorists. It is the first force in the country to go into the business, and has its workshops in Bicester, Oxfordshire, and Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, registered as test centres. A spokesman said: "We found it was cheaper to do our own MoTs rather than take our vehicles to a garage. A requirement of being registered as an MoT facility is to open it to the public."

Abbey's uncivil war

A property tycoon offered to buy Fountains Abbey in North Yorkshire after being disturbed by the noise of a Civil War re-enactment there over the Bank holiday weekend. The trust has apologised to Paul Sykes, who says the din and smoke forced him to move temporarily out of Stadelly Royal House, his home on the estate, but it has turned down his offer to pass the abbey to local authority control.

Crash father's grief

The father of a teenage driver whose car crashed and caught fire, killing her and five passengers, spoke of his grief for the victims yesterday. Ted Raynham, 47, whose daughter Victoria, 18, right, was at the wheel when the car crashed in Eltham, south London, said: "Our hearts go out to the parents and loved ones of the teenagers who died with Vicki. Our thoughts and prayers are with them."



World Cup ban for Sky

The organisers of the Rugby World Cup in South Africa have barred Sky Television reporters from the tournament for breaching media guidelines. In a statement the organisers said Sky had ignored warnings not to take cameras into areas reserved for television companies with exclusive rights to cover matches for their home audiences. ITV has the sole rights to show the World Cup in Britain. Sky said it would appeal. Reports, pages 38, 39 and 44

Capital
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MAGAZINE

'I am delighted to confirm that the trust has withdrawn all allegations'

Hospital admits it was wrong to sack 'bossy' consultant

By Catherine Milton and Jeremy Laurence

A HOSPITAL that sacked a woman consultant for being bossy and rude admitted yesterday that she had been dismissed unfairly.

Dr Helena Daly's 2½-year battle to clear her name, which began when she was sacked by a hospital chief she says was her lover, ended with the Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust withdrawing all complaints against her. The trust accepted that some evidence used against her in disciplinary proceedings had been "tainted".

Minutes before a planned appeal, the trust dropped all allegations of misconduct in a deal that leaves Dr Daly, a 43-year-old haematologist, continuing on her £50,000-a-year salary until she finds a new job. Dr Daly, who always said she was fighting for reinstatement, has accepted she will have to leave Trillick hospital in Truro.

The case has cost more than £300,000, including approximately £150,000 paid to Dr Daly since September 1992, when she was sacked after an internal inquiry found her guilty of 23 charges of bossy and rude behaviour. She was dismissed by John Saxby, then

chief executive, who she said had been her lover for several years.

She won the right to appeal last year during an industrial tribunal in which Mr Saxby changed sides and admitted his decision had been wrong. Mr Saxby, who is married and has since moved to Darlington Memorial Hospital NHS Trust, has insisted he and Dr Daly were not lovers. Yesterday he sat beside her as she responded to the agreement.

She said: "I am delighted to confirm that the trust has withdrawn all allegations made against me and admitted that the decision to dismiss me was unfair, as I have always maintained." She begins a refresher course in July and is looking for another job.

Dr Daly, who said at first she thought her dismissal by her closest friend was "some ghastly mistake", praised Mr Saxby's courage in publicly changing his mind and paid tribute to the support of her patients. "I deeply regret that I cannot fulfil their expressed wish and remain as their doctor," she said. The protracted battle had built up "entrenched positions" making that "impracticable". In the

agreed statement, the trust admitted some evidence against Dr Daly given at the internal hearing "now appears unreliable". Because of that evidence, so as to reach a compromise and for the purposes of yesterday's appeal only, the trust conceded that Dr Daly's dismissal had been unfair. All "allegations, criticisms and charges" were withdrawn by both sides. The trust also agreed to contribute towards the cost of Dr Daly's legal expenses.

Brian Milstead, chief executive of the trust, said Dr Daly's legal costs were estimated to be around £200,000. He was pleased that a compromise had been reached but did not see Dr Daly as the victor or the trust as the loser in the dispute. He denied that the case had affected patients. Some of Dr Daly's supporters called out "Rubbish" and "Ask us".

Dr Daly's case has wide implications for the NHS and was closely watched by doctors and managers. Many consultants fear that the new freedom of NHS trusts to hire and fire will mean that anyone whose face does not fit can be dismissed.



Helena Daly, who accepts she will have to leave the hospital and find another job

Clifton bridge jumper saved by deep water

By Dominic Kennedy

A MAN jumped 245ft from Clifton suspension bridge yesterday and survived. Chris Copus, 36, escaped with broken bones after his fall was broken by the water.

Mr Copus was saved by the prompt action of bridge workers who rushed to help him after they saw him jump. His chances of survival were also greatly increased because he jumped at an ebb tide. The waters sink 20-30ft at low tide, exposing large stretches of mud where many jumpers meet their deaths.

Instead, Mr Copus had his fall broken by fairly deep water. He then managed to swim through the strong tide to the safety of the mud banks in spite of having a broken leg, arm and collar bone, chest injuries and a suspected broken back. His condition was critical but stable yesterday.

Mr Copus, who jumped at 10.35am, was rescued by a team of five workmen who had just begun replacing decorative light bulbs on the bridge. They ran a mile down a winding cliff path to the water's edge, commandeering a ladder from a council lorry to lay across the mud so they could reach the stricken man.

Clint Badlam, 24, of Bristol, said: "I was working on the suspension bridge and two of the guys shouted 'Someone has jumped'. We looked down and saw he was still moving. He was face down and he

turned over and came face up. We ran down and my friend got to him first while I flagged down a passing council van. "We got their ladder and laid it down on the mud and slid towards where he was in the mud. We threw him one of our harnesses that we use for abseiling on the bridge and he held onto it. We didn't try to move him. We just talked to him until emergency services arrived."

"He said his name was Chris and he was 36 but he didn't say any more than that. He is very lucky to be alive. This was only our first day working on the bridge. If he'd done it any day before we wouldn't have been here to see him or help him."

Pedro Noya, a colleague of Bristol, said: "He was already in the mud when we got to him. Somehow, he had swum over."

Paramedics crawled across the mud to fit Mr Copus with a neck collar. He was retrieved using equipment specially designed for Clifton rescues. Avon Fire Brigade has invented mud ladders from lengths of hose with slats across and a length of plastic sheeting underneath. These allow rescuers to reach a victim without sinking into the mud.

A special lightweight stretcher, also designed for Clifton rescues, was used to pull Mr Copus to safety.

Actor killed by sword in stage fight

By Emma Wilkins

AN ACTOR died after he was slashed with a broken sword during a mock fight on stage, an inquest was told yesterday.

Neil James, 40, was struck by his friend Matt Page, who did not realise that his sword had snapped to expose a jagged edge. The actors, who belonged to a touring sword-play troupe called *Kiss My Arse*, were performing before an audience of showbusiness agents at the Wembley Conference Centre, north London, in January. They hoped their performance would lead to bookings across Europe for the six-man group.

Just 20 seconds before the routine was due to end, Page, 27, lunged at his friend as usual but the broken sword tore into an artery in James's thigh. James, of Glascoate Heath, Staffordshire, who was married with seven children, died later in hospital from haemorrhaging caused by a ruptured femoral artery.

His wife, Maureen, who is considering taking legal action against the swordmakers, said that he was an experienced swordsman. "Neil had been sword-fighting in medieval societies for ten years and the fights were always choreographed."

Dr William Dolman, the coroner at Hornsey, north London, recorded a verdict of death by misadventure.

Killers 'sprayed petrol' over fire attack victim

By Emma Wilkins

DETECTIVES hunting the killers of a retired policeman believe that he was sprayed with petrol before being set alight. David Stedman, 69, attempted to fight off the assailants but died from almost 100 per cent burns after the attack at his home in Leicester.

Police arrested and then released four men. There were several more arrests yesterday but police would not say how many people were helping with inquiries. A police spokesman said bruises on Mr Stedman's body suggested that he had put up "game resistance" when the attacker broke into his first-floor flat on the Beaumont Leys estate on Saturday.

The intruders used tools to break down the door and later discarded a fire extinguisher, half full of petrol, on the landing outside the flat. "Forensic tests indicate that the fire extinguisher had been filled with petrol," a spokesman for Leicester police said. "We believe this may have been used to spray Mr Stedman."

Mr Stedman, who was married with two children, served as a Police Constable between August 1953 and December 1959 in Gosport. He moved to Leicester eight years ago and lived in the flat with his ex-wife Christine and a lodger, Colin South. Mrs Stedman

and Mr South were on holiday together near Skegness when they were told of the killing and have not yet returned to Leicester.

Police said yesterday that there had been several crimes reported near Mr Stedman's flat in the past few months, including vandalism and cars being set on fire.

Police want to trace two youths in their late teens who were seen leaving the block of flats at or around the time of the attack. They are believed to have driven away in a green saloon car. Police said that they were keeping an open mind as to the motive, amid suggestions of a possible grudge attack.

Elderly residents on the estate — a sprawling, roach council housing, suburb built in the 1970s — said yesterday that they were shocked at the manner of Mr Stedman's death. They were also reluctant to talk for fear of reprisals. The residents have spoken of regular abuse and threats of violence from groups of youths, frequent break-ins and vandalism.

A grandmother, who gave her name as Annie, said: "The kids here just run riot. They control — they just do what they like. We are in our own home of 30 years and it seems to be a law of the land. They have charges at the moment."

Two men held over murder of boy

By Stewart Tindler
CRIMES CORRESPONDENT

TWO men were arrested yesterday for the abduction and murder of Daniel Handley, 9, who went missing from his home in Beckton, east London, last October. His death has been linked by police to a paedophile gang.

The men being held are white and aged 32 and 58. They were taken to separate police stations last night for questioning. They were arrested at mimic offices in Rotherhithe New Road and Cambewell New Road in southeast London.

Daniel went missing soon after he was seen talking to two men in a silver or grey car near his home on October 2. His remains were found in a shallow grave on wasteland outside Bristol nine weeks ago. The cause of death has not been established.

The arrests yesterday came after a tip-off and follow an appeal on the BBC programme *Crimewatch* two weeks ago. The programme included a computer-enhanced impression of a man police believe was chatting to Daniel in a café in a Bristol suburb near the site of his grave.

Police have said they believe Daniel may have been taken by a paedophile ring and was alive for up to a month after he went missing.

New-look Conran poses topless at 62

THE best-selling novelist Shirley Conran has posed topless at the age of 62 because she is thrilled with cosmetic surgery to reduce the size of her bust. "I want women to realise once and for all that there is no shame or embarrassment in admitting that they've had cosmetic surgery," Conran said.

She spent £7,000 at a Harley Street clinic having her bust reduced from 46DD to 36B,

and also had a tummy tuck and an appendix scar removed. She had 14lb removed from each breast and 3lb from her stomach. "If women want or need such surgery they should just go for it," Conran said.

The writer of the Superwoman guide and the novels *Lace and Savages* is shown topless in the sea near her Monte Carlo home, in the June issue of *OK!* magazine.

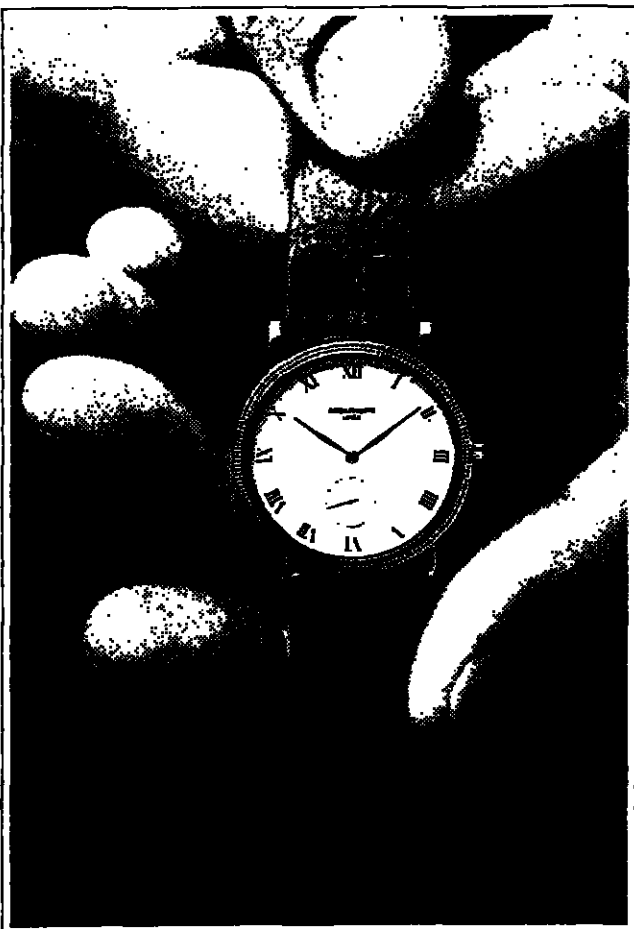
"Everybody in Monaco sees me at the beach topless... I thought it would be really silly if I didn't allow others outside Monaco to see me topless."

The photographs, with thin lines under her bust as the only sign of her operation last October, would be "reassuring to other women," said Conran, former wife of the designer and retailer Sir Terence Conran and mother of the fashion designer Jasper.



Conran: £7,000 operation

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SATURDAY IN THE TIMES



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THE SIX-SECTION TIMES IS 30p ON SATURDAY



Eliot, whose pseudonym did not fool Dickens

Dickens saw through novelist's cover story

By John Young

A LETTER by Charles Dickens which reveals how perceptive he was about another novelist's work goes on sale next month.

He wrote in January 1858 to Joseph Langford of Blackwood's, publishers of a new book on which Dickens delivered this verdict: "If those two volumes, or a part of them, were not written by a woman — then I should begin to believe that I am a woman myself."

The book was *Scenes of Clerical Life*, ostensibly the first work of one George Eliot, in reality penned by Mary Ann Evans. Like the

Brontë sisters, she thought that she stood a better chance of impressing misogynist Victorian publishers by adopting a male pseudonym.

Felix Pryor, manuscript specialist for the auctioneers Phillips, said yesterday: "This was Eliot's first book, and it was not generally known that the author was a woman." Dickens's letter is expected to fetch up to £6,000 when it is sold by Phillips in London on June 15.

He asked Langford to convey his thanks to Eliot, "whose first two stories I can never say enough of. I think them so truly admirable".



MIDLAND



Should a bank charge a small business?

We thought it would be fairly clear-cut: we thought every small business would say no. But when we conducted a survey amongst two

"It's how they make their money. I wouldn't print them a business card for nothing." Mark Hinson, Prestige Printers.

hundred small business owners, the results surprised us. 27% actually felt that their bank was perfectly justified in charging for the service it provided. To them, a bank was just

another supplier, like a solicitor or a photocopier contractor or a cleaning service. Even among the 70% who felt they shouldn't

be charged, the most common gripe was not, as we expected, about the principle of being charged; it was about the amount they were charged. They said

that running a business was a delicate balance between income, overheads and profit. And to a small business, the cost of banking was a very real overhead that

could upset that balance.

So where have we come out? Well, in the interest of encouraging new business ventures, we've decided that our service and advice should be free for fledgling businesses during their first 12 months — whether they're in credit, or debit. After that, however, we consider it fair to charge you for the service we provide. But it's worth knowing that our business tariff has been the lowest of all

major banks for the past five years. We've also realised that people are more tolerant about bank charges if they know exactly what they're for. That's why it's

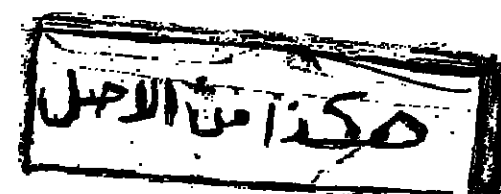
"A bank should help a small business, not ruin it with extortionate charges."

Bethan Alcock, Plessey Hair and Beauty.

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Parents failing in duty to discipline, say head teachers

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

TEN thousand pupils will be excluded from school this year, as teachers fight a losing battle with children whose parents have abdicated responsibility for them.

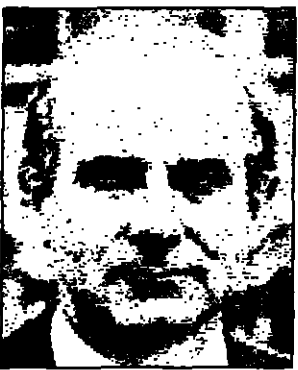
The National Association of Head Teachers says that many children, steeped in violence, are starting school unable to play. Even in nurseries, a minority is constantly kicking and swearing at classmates.

Liz Paver, head of intake first school in Doncaster, South Yorkshire, said young children often had no respect for themselves or the other children and adults around them. "Their childhood has been taken away from them. We want to restore childhood to the glory that it had. We want children to be nurtured inside and outside school."

Parental responsibility has become the theme of the NAHT's annual conference, which opened yesterday in Harrogate, North Yorkshire. The president and general secretary will use their piece speeches to challenge society's expectations of

schools. At a pre-conference briefing, George Varnava, who will be installed as the association's president today, said: "Schools have been given more and more responsibility for children, to the point where they are expected to do practically everything and then take the blame when things go wrong. The community and parents have relinquished responsibility for children."

Mr Varnava said children were "playing the system".



Hart criticises the government approach

safe in the knowledge that there would be no sanctions outside school. Shopkeepers who caught children shoplifting, for example, inevitably called the police, rather than parents or the police, because they saw it as the point of authority.

David Hart, the NAHT's general secretary, said the Government had spent too much time "dragging" schools into particular approaches to discipline and too little guiding parents. "When a hard core of parents do not play their part, school is being asked to deliver an impossible job," he said.

Mr Hart added that, although the vast majority of parents took their responsibilities seriously, a rising minority of disruptive pupils exercised an influence beyond their numbers. The scale of permanent exclusions from school had tripled in three years, and the number was expected to top 10,000 this school year.

Local authorities are obliged to provide education for pupils excluded from school. But most children in this position are taught for only a few hours a week until they are accepted by another school. Some end up in schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

John McNicholas, the outgoing president, said the motive for expulsions was rarely punitive. Schools were acting to protect the educational interests of the other pupils.

Teachers have become increasingly frustrated at the range of sanctions at their disposal to deal with disruptive pupils. New regulations limit their use of temporary exclusions and state schools are penalised financially when a pupil is expelled. Even detentions cannot be enforced if parents object.

Earlier this month in *The Times*, John Sutton, the general secretary of the Secondary Heads Association, called for a School's Charter to divide responsibilities more clearly between home and school. "A School's Charter would provide a proper balance to the Parent's Charter, and do much to reinforce the foundations of civilised order."

More than four head teachers out of ten expect to have to cut services in the new school year, according to a survey of NAHT members. Two thirds have seen class sizes rise over the past two years and almost half now have smaller budgets. Almost a third cannot meet their legal obligations towards pupils with special needs.



A student using a laser to clean a bust at the National Museums and Galleries, Merseyside

Art expert turns critical laser on 'archaic' cleaning methods

By NICK NUTTALL
TECHNOLOGY
CORRESPONDENT

CHEMICALS used to clean valuable paintings are causing irreparable damage and should be banned in favour of lasers. It was claimed yesterday.

Scientists have found that lasers, which use high-energy light beams to burn off old varnish, offer a safe alternative for ridding works of art of grime. Some art critics claim that many works, such as Veronese's *The Family of Darius* at the feet of Alexander in the National Gallery, London, and the Sistine Chapel ceiling paintings of Michelangelo in Rome, have been subtly changed by traditional chemical cleaning methods.

But many museums and galleries persist in using chemicals because they cannot admit they are wrong, a leading art historian said yesterday. Michael Daley, director of Art Watch International, a grouping of artists and art historians, said: "We would like to see a two-year moratorium on the cleaning of art works so that modern techniques like lasers can be properly evaluated by museums and galleries. There is an absolutely consistent pattern with the old masters after cleaning chemicals have been used. The colours come up brighter but the form and shape is diminished."

Mr Daley, who will make his criticisms in *New Scientist* later this week, cited the National Gallery's Veronese as a prime example of chemical damage. He said that the sky had become a "washed-out brown" and that drapery which was once green is now gold.

"Museums and galleries will claim that what they have taken off is a restorer's touch-up. But what gives a lie to this is that two pieces of architec-



The Family of Darius: changed by chemicals?

ture have gone missing which could not have been added by a restorer."

Galleries from London to New York have rolling programmes to clean their works of art. Most use acetone or a solvent called propan-2-ol and white spirit, or special soaps, to eat off discoloured varnish.

John Larson, head of sculpture conservation at the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, said yesterday: "Cleaning by chemicals is extremely dangerous and archaic. It is said that the soaps can be controlled. But to be honest it is extremely difficult to control them and you can never be

sure you are not leaving behind residues."

Mr Larson became interested in lasers while at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. "We were working on complex wood sculptures. Unlike many conservators at museums, we worked under the microscope and this showed the effects of solvents and chemical treatments."

The National Museums and Galleries have been using lasers to burn off black, sooty pollution from sculptures. Mr Larson said that a laser beam could be set to remove layers of dirt almost molecule by molecule, without burning the sculpture's surface. Religious paintings in Crete had recently been cleaned by laser, he added.

Mr Larson, who will attend the first international conference on laser cleaning and conservation in Crete in October, added: "And the beauty is that once the laser is switched off, that's it. There is no further reaction possible."

Tony Reeve, a senior conservator with the National Gallery, said chemicals were the proven method. "Laser technology is not proven and not suitable for paintings, but could be in the future."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mental patient murdered

A care-in-the community patient has been found stabbed to death in her home. Helena Szymczuk, 48, moved out of sheltered accommodation for the mentally ill in Ashington, Northumberland, to live independently three years ago.

Police said the door of her flat was unlocked and there was no sign of forced entry when her body was found on Monday night.

Housego banned

Fred Housego, the taxi driver who won *Mastermind* in 1980, was banned from driving and fined £600 by Thames magistrates after admitting drink-driving. Housego, 50, of Croyley, Hertfordshire, had drunk more than twice the legal limit of alcohol. He now faces the prospect of losing his taxi-driving licence.

Cantona time up

Eric Cantona, the Manchester United footballer convicted of assault, has completed his 120 hours of community service in six weeks by doing the maximum possible each week. Cantona, who was given a community service order for kicking a Crystal Palace supporter, carried out 60 coaching sessions in Salford.

Girl's body found

The body of Danielle Gratton, 13, who left her home in Hall Green, Birmingham, on May 16 after a row, has been found in a ditch a few hundred yards away. Police said there were no suspicious circumstances.

Tram contest

Steven Norris, the Transport Minister, launched a competition to select a company to design, finance, build, operate and maintain the £150 million Croydon Tramlink, which should be operational in 1997.

Sight restored

Fred Orion, 102, of Draycott, Derbyshire, almost blind for several years, can see again after cataracts were removed by laser. It is believed to be the first time a centenarian has had the operation.

Viaduct saved

The Laigh Milton viaduct across the River Irvine near Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, believed to be the oldest railway viaduct in Britain, has been saved after a successful £1 million rescue campaign.

Bishop named

The next Bishop of Derby will be the Right Rev Jonathan Bailey, Suffragan Bishop of Dunwich, near Ipswich, since 1992. He succeeds the Right Rev Peter Daves, who retires at the end of July.

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HELLO!

Out Now and Every Week

MEDICAL BRIEFING

Odds of recovery influenced by patient's lifestyle

Dr Thomas Stuttford

SOME insomniacs who wake well before dawn may well have heard Dr Richard Peto of Oxford broadcasting for the World Service from Prague at 5am yesterday morning. Dr Peto was at a conference discussing the incidence of cancer of the lung in Eastern Europe where the number of patients with the disease has recently reached epidemic proportions.

He explained that whereas in Britain someone who smokes cigarettes might consider that they were risking reasonably long odds against getting cancer, in the old Eastern Bloc, where smoking was still socially acceptable, their chances were less good, for there was an even chance that they would die of a disease related to cigarette smoking before they were 70.

Professor Tim Oliver, of the Royal London and St Bartholomew's Medical College, said that he, too, had heard the doctor's broadcast. Professor Oliver agreed with Dr Peto that the likelihood of death from cigarette smoking was enhanced by other external factors. Someone who might get away with it, other things being equal, would succumb if they were also the subject of additional risk factors. The patient who had a well-

ordered lifestyle, a well-balanced diet and whose blood pressure and serum cholesterol were normal, might not suffer a fatal coronary thrombosis.

Similarly there was a lesser likelihood that someone who had not been exposed to the fumes of coke ovens, or contact with, for instance, such occupational pollutants as chromates or nicks stood a lesser chance of developing cancer of the lung. Even after developing cancer of the lung the patient's background affected their chance of survival.

A patient from Guildford admitted to the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel, east London, would respond in a middleclass way, whereas a patient from Whitechapel admitted to Guildford might well take their disadvantages with them. Professor Oliver had found that patients in the East End who smoked did not do very much better than those from Eastern Europe: deprivation did not end at the iron curtain.

The good news is that modern therapy is prolonging survival times wherever a patient is treated; and that this improved outlook is enhanced if the patient can be persuaded to stop smoking even in a late stage of the disease.

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Service will cut costly legal bills

Mediation aims to keep neighbours' wars out of court

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

WARRING neighbours in Scotland will from tomorrow be able to call on the services of an independent mediator to sort out their differences without incurring large legal bills. Community Mediation in Edinburgh aims to provide a service that will encourage both parties to air their grievances and help them to reach an amicable settlement without recourse to lawyers. Similar mediation schemes exist throughout Britain but they tend to tackle a wider variety of disputes.

The new venture is well timed: as summer temperatures start to rise, so do disputes between neighbours. Lawyers and citizens' advice bureaux are bracing themselves for the seasonal surge in disputes. Rows that have been simmering over the winter months come to the boil as people take to their gardens and fling open doors and windows.

Each year, the Consumers' Association is deluged with complaints by one neighbour about another. The top ten complaints are: noisy neighbours, car alarms, house alarms, damage by DIY enthusiasts, noisy or dangerous dogs, parking, boundary disputes, rows over who pays for repairs, overhanging trees and extensions.

Keith Richards, a senior lawyer with the association, said: "These kinds of dispute seem to be on the increase." He added that an overriding feature of disputes between neighbours is people seething

in silence until they reach a stage when they blow up, without having ever mentioned whatever is annoying them. "The first many people know about an angry neighbour is when he appears red-faced on the doorstep."

The National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux says that, at most, neighbour disputes account for 2 per cent of its annual seven million inquiries, but they tend to be among the most difficult to sort out.

Pamela Lloyd-Hart, manager of the CAB in the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand, London, said: "The commonest kind we see are boundary disputes and they tend to be the most acrimonious. I can think of two which went all the way to the Court of Appeal and involved massive costs in the order of £30,000. Once you go into battle, it's very difficult to get people to recognise the situation for what it is, fighting over perhaps two inches of land."

A concerted effort is being made by advice agencies to keep disputes between neighbours out of court. In line with government policy to see disputes dealt with informally where possible, people are encouraged to talk to one another, to use mediation services or arbitration, and view action very much as a last resort.

The Consumers' Association and CABs have an action checklist that people are advised to follow, starting with talking to the neighbour. If the neighbour is a tenant, there is



Justin Skelton at Porthowan beach where he contracted his ear infection

Surfers with ear infections to sue water company

BY EMMA WILKINS

A GROUP of surfers who claim they became ill after swimming in contaminated sea off the Cornish coast are taking legal action against their local water company.

The claims for personal injury against South West Water could open the way for hundreds of swimmers to sue water companies alleging illness through bathing. The four surfers, who are seeking compensation of up to £10,000 each, suffered severe and recurring ear infections after swimming off beaches near St Agnes. It is understood that South West Water, which charges the highest bills in the country and has just announced pre-tax profits of almost £100 million, will contest the claims.

Justin Skelton, 14, from Mount Hawke, near Truro, fears he may go deaf after contracting a serious ear infection while surfing off St Agnes beach three years ago. "My ear canals were so swollen that the doctor couldn't even get an instrument in to clean them," he said. "If the infection becomes more serious, I could go deaf."

The problem of bathing waters contaminated with raw sewage is particularly acute along the English Riviera and northern coasts of Devon and Cornwall which become crowded during the summer.

Surfers Against Sewage, a pressure group with 19,000 members, is co-ordinating the legal action. Charles Hopkins, the solicitor handling the surfers' cases, said proceedings would be issued against South West Water this summer. "We have just received positive medical reports from a consultant which supports our cases," he said.

South West Water, which is spending £900 million on improvements to bathing water quality, said it could progress only as quickly as its customers would allow. "We have the highest bills in the country and the clean-up scheme is the biggest single contributor to driving the prices up," Alan Smith, its spokesman, said.

Garden hedge grows into a £50,000 dispute

BY OUR LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A QUARRELL over a hedge of cypress trees has grown into one of the costliest and most bitter disputes between neighbours.

Its roots go back to 1971 and legal costs so far are estimated at £50,000. The case reached the Court of Appeal last year for an interim ruling and returns there in August for a final hearing in Birmingham.

In 1971 a retired engineer in the city, Charles Stanton, who is now 88, planted the hedge a foot inside a fence between his garden and that of Michael Jones, 66, a retired teacher. By 1979 the trees were 35ft high and in 1989 Mr Jones lopped 5ft off the top. He said: "They were excluding sunlight from my garden."

Mr Stanton is claiming damages of more than £30,000 to buy trees of the size his would have been if left untrimmed. The bill for legal costs on both sides could reach £100,000.

A Jewish couple and their two children in Twickenham, Middlesex, were recently awarded £30,000 after five years' abuse from neighbours who sprayed the family with weedkiller and hung pigs' tails on a washing line.

But the award to Danny Israel, a photographer, against Bridget Cunningham and her brothers has not left him feeling victorious. "I have just been notified that she intends to appeal," he said.



Jones: lopped 5ft off his neighbour's cypresses

The court rulings "settle nothing". "They just open the way for the next legal proceedings." The court action was the eighth between the neighbours, including civil actions and criminal prosecutions.

A couple in their 70s living in a north London bungalow have just won a two-year legal battle with their neighbours over what their solicitor described as "just two millimetres of cement". Legal fees for both sides totalled £15,000 and the couple are still waiting to receive their costs.

The neighbours complained that a boundary wall in the front garden was crumbling and dangerous. Although they disagreed, the couple had it repaired, only to be accused of encroaching fractionally onto the neighbours' land. The neighbours embarked on a court action that culminated in a hearing at a county court last month.

Morecambe plans old jokes' home

BY KATE ALDERSON

A NATIONAL Museum of Comedy, Laughter Pavilion and humour archive are planned for Morecambe's seafront in a multimillion-pound project to celebrate the work of comedies and the British sense of humour.

Plans for the country's first comedy headquarters, which will preserve and promote the work of British comedians, include a joint project in London for a Comedy Institute and permanent exhibition.

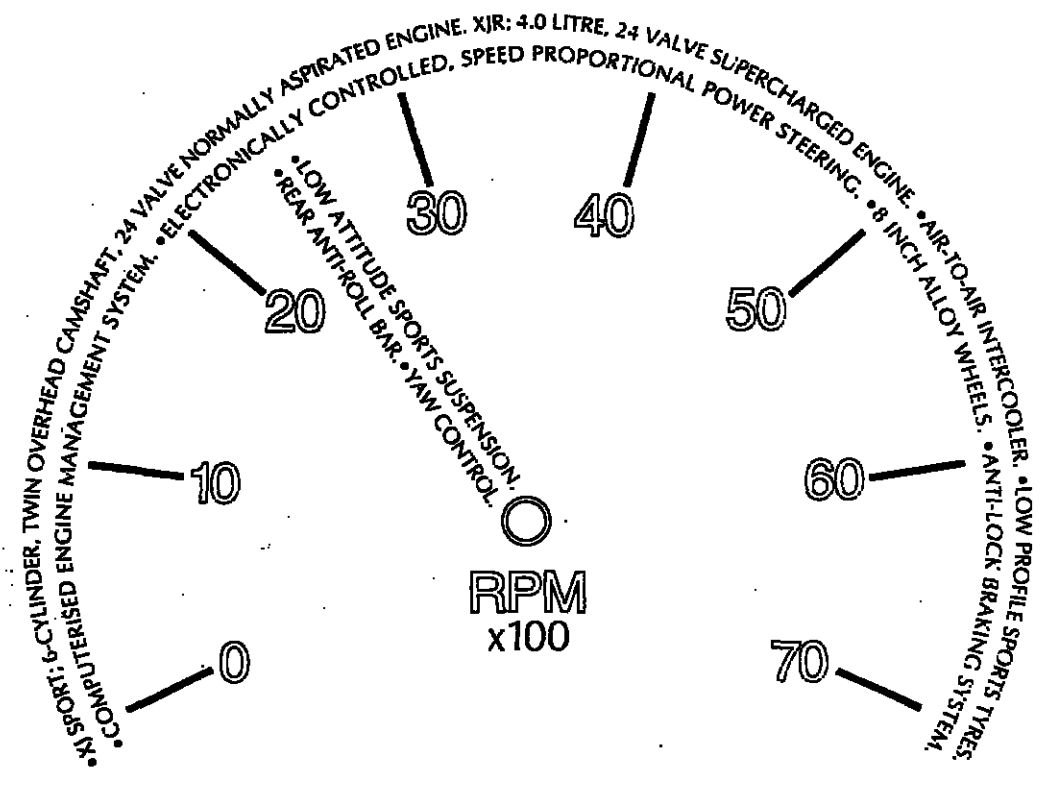
"For all that we brag about our comedy and sense of humour, we have neglected to formally recognise this great contribution to our culture and identity," Jeremy Gomm, who devised the project, said. "There is no national archive of comedy material, no centre of comic studies, nowhere to go to learn about our comic heritage."

The project, led by Mr Gomm, editor-in-chief of Lancaster & Morecambe newspapers, is backed by comedians, Comic Heritage and Lancaster City Council.

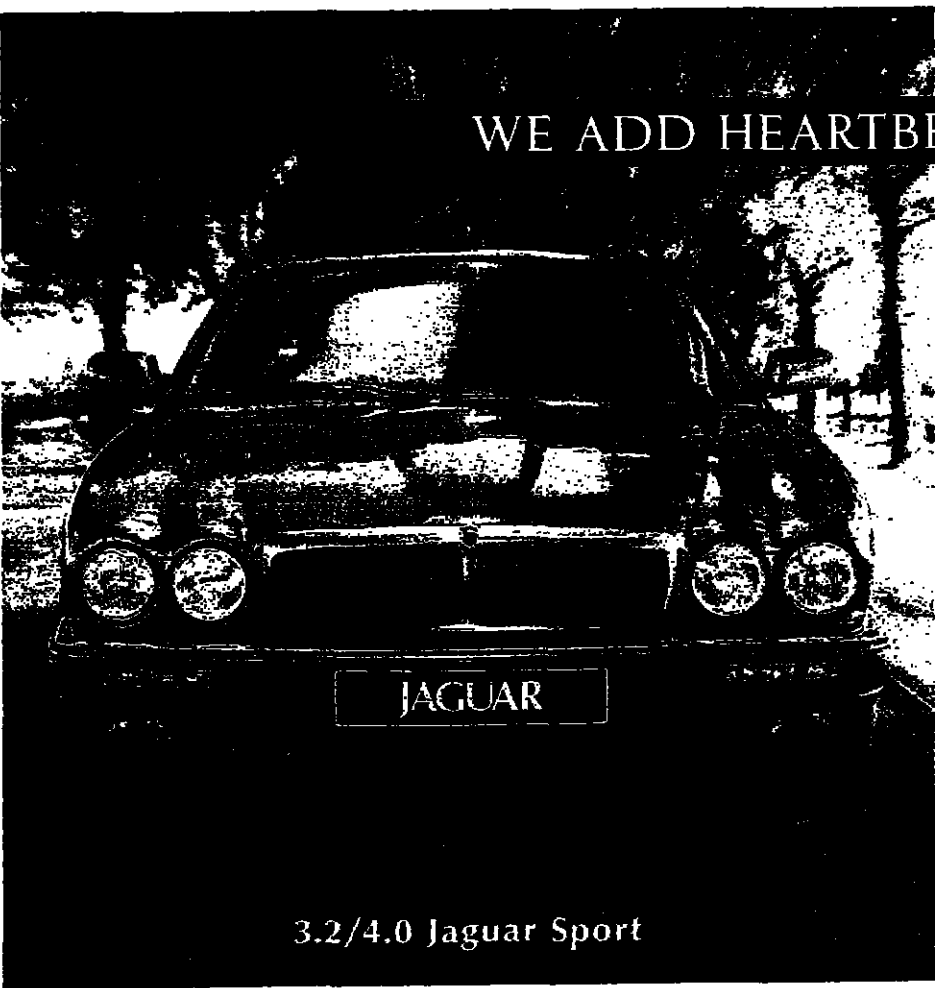
The Winter Gardens, an empty listed building on Morecambe seafront, has been earmarked for the museum which is hoping for funding from the National Lottery, Millennium Commission and National Heritage Memorial Fund.

It will gather television, film and radio material, photographs and memorabilia and trace the roots of British comedy. Visitors will be able to play-act the roles of their favourite comedians in virtual reality-style films.

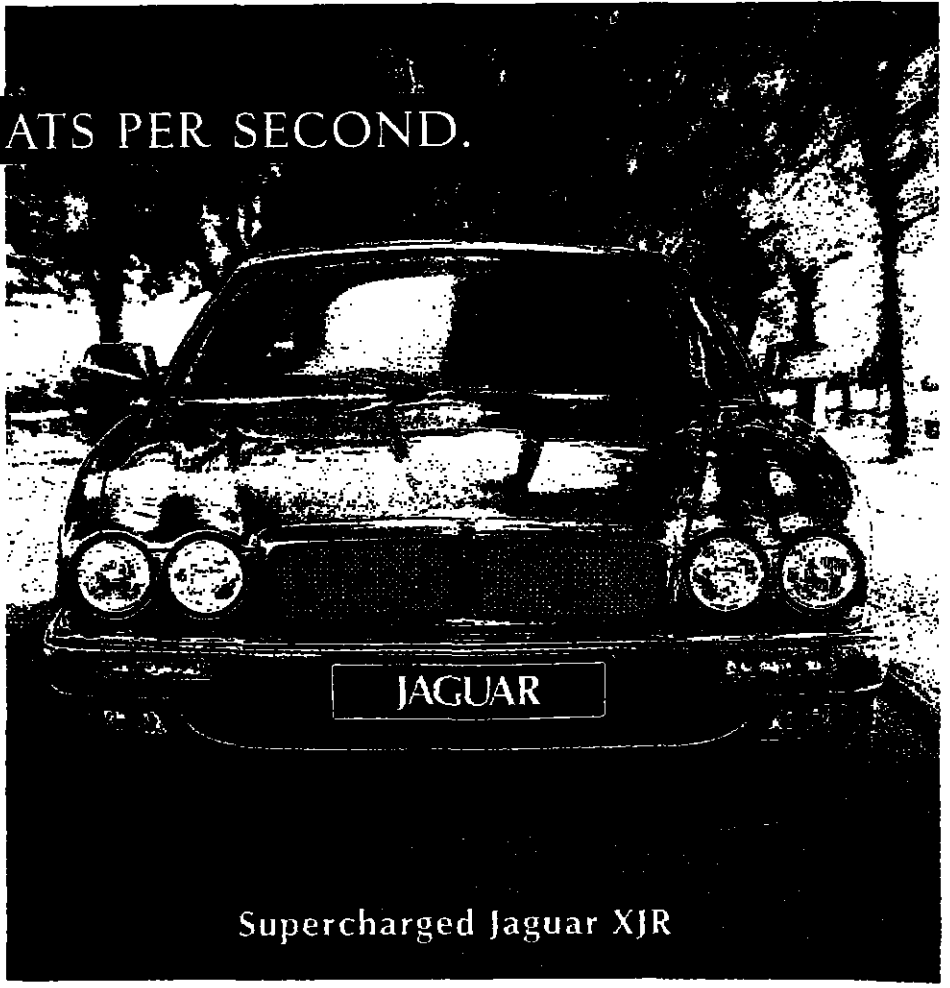
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DON'T DREAM IT. DRIVE IT.

Labour leader would not surrender veto but would 'play an active part in leadership of Europe'

Blair pledges to sign the Social Chapter

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

TONY BLAIR set out his European credentials in Bonn yesterday and was applauded loudly for his commitment to signing the Social Chapter "as one of the first acts" of a Labour government.

The Labour leader was given something of a hero's welcome: the top Social Democrat leadership, including its chairman Rudolf Scharping, senior businessmen and a big chunk of the diplomatic corps were among the several hundred listeners packed into the Friedrich Ebert Foundation for his speech advertised as "Britain in Europe: a Labour view".

Chancellor Kohl met Mr Blair later in the day and both agreed that the Bosnian crisis showed the need to co-operate closely on European foreign

and security matters. The encounter came only five days after a summit between Herr Kohl and John Major, which was transformed at short notice into a crisis management session on Bosnia.

Herr Kohl went out of his way in a news conference yesterday to praise Mr Blair as "a thoughtful and clever" man, perhaps to offset criticism that he is shifting his support to Mr Blair. The Labour leader, for his part, was determined to show that he would not surrender British positions should he be elected while the inter-governmental conference on Europe was still in train.

"We will not agree to giving up our national veto in crucial areas like security, taxation, treaty change, and border



Tony Blair with Chancellor Kohl yesterday. Many Labour policies are close to those of Herr Kohl's party

controls on third-country nationals," he said. "We will maintain the veto vigorously in the key areas."

He insisted that there was not a good case for merging justice and foreign policy matters into the institution of the Community. "In our view most governments will, in reality, wish these areas to remain on an inter-governmental basis, although we would wish to see greater openness and accountability of decision-making in these areas."

In other respects though, the

British Labour position seemed to be almost identical to that of the German Social Democrats, which in turn is close to that of the Christian Democrat Herr Kohl. Qualified majority voting could be extended "in areas of social, environmental, industrial and regional policy, especially if there is a reweighting of qualified majority voting", Mr Blair said.

He refused to be drawn afterwards on the question of a referendum on European monetary union, saying only: "Any major step towards inte-

gration should be with the consent of the people. We have to take the people with us."

His six-point programme could easily have been formulated by Herr Kohl's European speech-makers. The relationship between Bonn and London under a Labour government would be absolutely central, he said.

"Under a Labour government I am determined that Britain will play an active part in the leadership of Europe. And our relationship with Germany will be central to playing that role. Where we

can work together we will often be able to carry others with us, in a way that neither Britain nor Germany can do alone."

The speech seemed to be a conscious counterpart to Mr Major's "Heart of Europe" speech in Bonn shortly after coming to power. Mr Blair said: "I have no doubt at all that the future of my country lies in being at the heart of Europe." His speech was designed to show that a Labour government could make this a more credible promise than the present administration.

The speech that Hurd would like to have given

Tony Blair yesterday gave the speech Douglas Hurd and other Cabinet pro-Europeans would like to have been able to deliver. They probably agree with 90 per cent of the Labour leader's lecture in Bonn, as John Major might have done in his "heart of Europe" days before Maastricht. There are differences, notably over the social chapter and qualified majority voting. But the similarities are more striking.

The speech was no exercise in Euro-enthusiasm, but rather the sober Euro-realism of the post-Maastricht variety. Mr Blair recognises that political opinion got ahead of public opinion. "The immediate issue in Europe today is not more power to European institutions but how the power already given is exercised more openly and effectively."

A Blair government would sound more positive about Europe, stressing the benefits of membership rather than the problems. But the rest of Europe should not be misled by Mr Blair's smile and ready handshake. Labour may embrace "social Europe" and favour a more active regional and industrial role for the EU. But enthusiasts for closer integration would not get much support from a Blair government, as some Labour MEPs are already complaining.

Labour's approach on key issues of integration versus inter-governmental cooperation would be little different from now. There are many overlaps: in the emphasis on enlargement (where Mr Blair wants to give the potential new entrants from central Europe observer status on political matters); on the urgency of reform of the common agricultural policy; and on strengthening defence and foreign policy co-operation between governments rather than bringing them under com-

munity institutions. Mr Blair is insistent about not giving up Britain's national veto "in crucial areas like security, taxation, treaty change and border controls on third country nationals".

A Blair government would have more freedom of manoeuvre to negotiate than the Major Government. It might reach agreement at the IGC on broadly the same terms as Mr Major and Mr Hurd would like to endorse but may be unable to do because of internal Tory divisions. That is why other European countries do not want to finish the IGC until after the general election.

A Labour government might, however, find itself in conflict with other countries on reforming the CAP, reducing national vetoes and in some of its pre-conditions for monetary union. Mr Blair

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

stresses the need for real convergence between economies before currencies are locked together. Like Mr Major, Mr Blair warns against the idea of a hard core of states moving ahead in a different way from the others.

The Labour leader has to read carefully: the opponents of a single currency in the Shadow Cabinet may be quiet now, but they exist. A Blair government would have a different style on Europe, but the substance of its policies, while in marked contrast to Baroness Thatcher and the sceptics, would be similar in many ways to the traditional Tory approach.

However, the mainstream pro-European consensus is partially suppressed on the Tory side. It is now only explicit in the Labour party.

PETER RIDDELL

Army of political advisers costs £1.5m

By NIGEL WILLIAMSON
WHITEHALL CORRESPONDENT

THE army of political advisers to government ministers has grown to record proportions and is costing the taxpayer an estimated £1.5 million a year.

The first publication of the full list of such appointments, issued by the Prime Minister last week, shows that ministers now employ 36 political advisers on Civil Service contracts. Almost a third are drawn from Conservative Central Office. Their brief is to bridge the gap between governmental and party political work but they are paid from the public purse.

Although bound by many of the rules of conduct applicable to other civil servants, special advisers may, with the approval of their ministers, attend party functions, liaise with party members and participate in party policy reviews. They may also undertake all forms of local political activity and many are using their position in government service as a stepping stone to a political career.

The 36 advisers are on salaries ranging from £19,503 to £67,609. Individual salaries are not disclosed. Last year the Prime Minister disclosed in a parliamentary answer that the salary bill for special advisers since 1988 was £9 million.

First rail franchises 'will grab' subsidy

By JONATHAN PRYNN
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

THE privatisation of British Rail could lead to a two-tier network, with the first franchises grabbing the bulk of the BR subsidy at the expense of those "Cinderella" services at the back of the queue, a committee of MPs says.

A draft report from the Transport Select Committee says the £1.8 billion budget allocated to Roger Salmon, the rail franchise director, may not be enough to support all BR's loss-making services. It says the later franchises, serving mainly commuter and rural routes, will suffer if the bulk of the subsidy is used in the early stages of the sell-off before the general election.

The report says that if Mr Salmon accepted bids for franchises that required more subsidy than BR was at present receiving then there would be pressure to cut back the level of service required for later franchises in order to keep within overall budget.

Details of seven of the 25 passenger franchises have been announced. They include InterCity routes to Edinburgh, Penzance and Leeds, and Gatwick Express. Rail experts believe these have been put at the head of the list to give the auction of passenger services — the most controversial aspect of the break-up of BR — the best possible start.

Emergency debate marks rare recall

By JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

MPs and Peers return to Westminster today for an emergency debate on Bosnia, marking the thirteenth time that Parliament has been recalled during a recess since the Second World War.

Both debates are due to start at 2.30pm. The Commons will hold an adjournment debate while the Lords will debate a motion noting the "situation in Bosnia and the Government's response to it". In the Commons, the Prime Minister will open for the Government. The debate could technically last until 10pm, but is expected to end by 7pm.

According to the rules,

Parliament is recalled at the request of the Government. However, it is the Speaker and the Lord Chancellor who take the decision and make the announcement.

Although the Speaker can refuse a request to recall the Commons, this has not happened in living memory. Miss Boothroyd, who has been on holiday in Cyprus, returned last night.

In practice, it is the Whips who summon their MPs back. The Government and Opposition have put out one-line whips, which means attendance is optional.

UN search, page 11

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RIDDELL ON
POLITICS

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A Labour government might
however, and itself a
conflict with other countries
on reforming the EU. The
majority of the Labour Party
and some of its constituents
are in favour of a more
monetary union. Mr Blair

Sakhalin rescuers battle to reach survivors as cold poses new threat in devastated oil town

Quake teams in race against time

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN NEFTYEGORSK

RESCUE workers battled yesterday to free dozens of people still alive under the rubble of last Sunday's earthquake on Sakhalin Island in the Russian Far East.

Although the final death toll is still expected to exceed 2,000, officials in the oil town of Neftegorsk said 32 survivors had been detected after mechanical work was stopped and rescue workers shovelled down into the ruins. On the outskirts, earthmovers cleared ground for family-sized graves. News that a child had been brought out alive from the rubble brought brief cheer to break the relentless scenes of grief and suffering.

As aftershocks rippled through the town, Moscow's emergency operation involving 800 specialists, 18 planes and 14 helicopters was hampered by a lack of lifting equipment and poor communications. Sakhalin Island is 4,500 miles and eight time zones east of the capital.

In addition to the injuries they have suffered, survivors still among the rubble are threatened by the cold as night temperatures drop below freezing. "Now we are trying to get them out," said Aleksandr Avdoshin, spokesman for the Ministry for Emergency Situations. "But there are no fewer than 2,000 others trapped, maybe dead." President Yeltsin, in a televised address to the nation, prom-

ised to pay up to 50 million roubles (6,250) to every victim's family and declared today a national day of mourning. The earthquake, measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale, tore through Neftegorsk in the small hours as most in the remote settlement of 3,200 slept.

Of the 654 survivors found so far, most have injuries. By yesterday, 325 bodies had been recovered. Officials blamed



shoddy building work and the closure of seismological warning stations for the high death toll. Flattened blocks of flats dated from the 1960s and 1970s, a time when Soviet builders traditionally cut corners in the desperate rush to provide accommodation.

Adding to the gloom was a warning by a Russian seismologist of worse to come. He forecast the Far Eastern peninsula of Kamchatka would soon be hit by a more severe earthquake.

As the rescue fight went on, two children played near a freshly dug grave. "We came here to bury our mother, grandmother and grandfather," said Sergei Makalyeva, eight. His sister Sveta, nine, said the two of them had escaped by themselves when the quake hit.

"Mummy was ill and Daddy had gone to the hospital. When the ground started moving, he [the father] was on the street and couldn't get back. Mummy was crushed but Daddy was okay," she said.

Another survivor, Olesia Eizler, described the nightmare. She and the rest of the town's youth were dancing to the last rap song of the night at the only disco in the town. "We did not have time to react, the walls simply caved in and the roof came down," said the 20-year-old student.

"For the next few hours I lay there, trapped beneath the rubble. My friends either side were dead but their bodies protected me from the masonry above. The only other living creatures I could hear were the rats."

When rescue workers finally reached her, she discovered that she and a girlfriend were the only survivors and that the 30 young people she had grown up with were all dead. Her parents and one younger brother who lived in a block of flats nearby were also killed. "I don't know why I am



Rescuers comb through the rubble of a collapsed block of flats in Neftegorsk, on Sakhalin Island, devastated by Sunday's earthquake

alive," she said. "I don't know why the quake happened here."

Former residents, dressed in a ragged assortment of clothes plucked from their homes, picked through what remained of their belongings, discarding torn photographs and broken records, but occasionally emerging triumphantly from the ruins clasping a fur coat.

Even the animals appeared to be transfixed by the scenes of devastation. Disorientated household pets sat loyally by the sites of where their homes once were. The sky above was thick with scavenging crows.

"I suppose it's pointless looking, but I'm still hoping I might be able to locate some of our valuables," said Valentina Sukhareva, a nursery school teacher whose hands were scratched raw by clawing through the rubble. The bathtub overturned and shielded her from falling concrete, but her husband was crushed to death as he read the newspaper in bed.

Aleksandr Leonov, an experienced rescue worker who went to help tackle the aftermath of the devastating Armenian quake in 1988, said that he was always surprised how resilient humans could be in

what seemed the most hopeless situations. "It looks like nothing could survive under this but twice a day we just switch off all our machines and listen in silence for the voices of those still alive," he said. "Just today we saved two families from a basement and even a granny."

Tokyo coalition in peril over apology for war

FROM GWEN ROBINSON IN TOKYO

THE increasing movement against an apology to mark the fiftieth anniversary in August of the end of the Second World War is threatening to bring down the fragile ruling coalition of Shinichi Murayama, the Prime Minister.

With only 18 days remaining of the present session of parliament, the issue has deepened rifts within Mr Murayama's disparate coalition. Leaders of his Socialist Party have said that Japan must acknowledge its aggression and apologise to countries which suffered at its hands during the war.

A draft resolution produced yesterday by a committee of government and opposition MPs, supporting an apology, expresses condolences for Japan's war dead and goes on to express "deep remorse and apologies for all of the damage and suffering Japan inflicted on China, the Korean peninsula and other countries of Asia and the Pacific".

However, the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which holds the major-

ity of seats in the coalition, says that it is sufficient to express condolences for all the war dead and a general wish for world peace.

Some Socialists have threatened to leave the coalition if the Liberal Democrats reject the anti-war resolution. They were joined at the weekend by leaders of New Party Sakigake, the third party in the coalition, which also threat-



Murayama: government faces fragmentation

ened to walk out if the apology proposal fails. "If it becomes clear that our view and the LDP's view of modern Japanese history are irreconcilable, then we cannot stay in this Government," Yukio Hatakeyama, Sakigake's secretary-general, said.

Seisuke Okuno, a former Education Minister who now chairs the group of MPs opposing the resolution, said his group had collected more than five million signatures against the apology, adding: "Japan did not fight the war against other Asian countries, but against the Allies from Europe and the United States... as a result, Asia stood up against white supremacy and gained independence."

Mr Okuno's group comprises more than half the MPs in the Diet. A small but vocal group, however, is in favour of the proposal to apologise for the war. It is supported by peace campaigners, academics and trade union groups, which staged demonstrations on Monday against a rally led by Mr Okuno rejecting any sign of contrition.

Two Seoul fishermen shot dead by North

FROM REUTERS IN SEOUL

TWO crew members of a South Korean trawler were killed and another was wounded yesterday when their boat was fired on and seized by a North Korean patrol boat, the South Korean Yonhap news agency said.

The South Korean Defence Ministry said that the 103-ton Woosung 86 was shot at after entering waters controlled by the North, but he was unable to confirm the deaths. A ministry spokesman said that the boat was returning to the South Korean port of Incheon from China, where it had been held since Saturday for fishing illegally.

The official Central News Agency in the North said: "A patrol boat of the navy of the Korean People's Army tried to check the unidentified boat, which began to flee. The patrol boat fired warning shots at the boat and apprehended it." South Korea put its navy on alert after the incident.

Single-minded drive to sell the Eurodollar

FROM MICHAEL DYNES IN BRUSSELS

WHETHER it is called the euro, the Eurodollar, the franken or the hamburger, the notes and coins of the new European single currency will not be in your pocket until 2003, the European Commission will announce today.

Overcoming public hostility and preventing turmoil on the international currency markets, during the transition from national currencies to the single currency, will be the main obstacles, the Commission will say. Unveiling the long-awaited "green paper" on technical preparations for economic and monetary union, Yves-Thibault de Silguy, the Economic Affairs Commissioner responsible for introducing the single currency, is to announce that the transition will happen in three stages.

The first will take place when European Union leaders decide which of the 15 EU member states fulfil the Maastricht treaty's economic convergence targets for reducing government debt and deficits, enabling them to proceed with full economic and monetary

union in 1999. Stage two will begin in the following year when European governments, banks and business executives begin detailed talks on the practicalities of introducing the new currency, such as modifying the EU's 3.5 million cash dispensers and altering the millions of vending machines and cash registers. At this stage, the single currency will exist side by side with national currencies, although largely confined to banking and financial circles.

The final stage will take place when the new notes and coins are eased into general circulation, replacing national currencies. Because of the time needed to design, print and mint the new money, the public will not get coins or notes for another two to four years.

No decision has yet been taken on what to call the new money. That will be decided some time in 1999 between the prime ministers and central bankers of those countries that go ahead with the single

currency. If Britain and Denmark exercise their opt-out, they will have no say in the naming of the new currency.

Suggestions that the currency unit will be called the franken are unfounded. As Franken is a region in northern Bavaria, that would be the equivalent of calling the new money the Yorkshire or the Bordeaux. Unless a common name can be agreed, the new currency may simply be called the mark in Germany, the franc in France and the pound in Britain. Currency from one country would be legal tender in all others.

Convincing Europe's financial institutions and consumers that the transition will take place is going to be an uphill struggle, according to a draft copy of the green paper that has been obtained by *The Times*. "Certain sectors of public opinion have been seized by doubt," the document says. "In economic and financial circles, the desirability, credibility and feasibility of the single currency have been questioned," it adds.

Israel acts to arrange Golan vote

Jerusalem: Political and legal moves were set in motion yesterday to enable Israelis to participate in the first referendum since the foundation of the Jewish state (Christopher Walker writes). The subject will be approval for a peace deal with Syria involving a withdrawal from the Golan Heights, occupied since 1967.

Colonel sought

Brussels: Belgium has issued an arrest warrant for a former Rwandan colonel allegedly involved in the killing of Agathe Uwilingiyimana, Rwanda's woman premier, and ten Belgians. (Reuters)

Mines task force

Phnom Penh: Injured victims of landmines are to be employed to rid Cambodia of millions of the devices, after graduating from a course run by the British Mines Awareness Group. (AFP)

Abbot held

Hong Kong: China has arrested Abbot Cha Tsa Chang-bazelling, who led the search for the boy declared by the Dalai Lama to be the reincarnation of Tibetan Buddhism's Panchen Lama. (AP)

French protest against privatisation

FROM CHARLES BREMMER IN PARIS

BRITAIN was branded as the bogymen yesterday when 40,000 electricity, gas, telecommunications and postal workers marched across Paris in a one-day national strike against European plans to open public services to competition.

Union chiefs leading protesters in the Place de l'Opera invoked what they depicted as the disaster looming for France if it followed Britain's path to privatisation.

"You see what Thatcher did for Britain. If we don't fight, Brussels will consign us to the same misery," boomed the

man from the CGT, the Communist-led union. It was ironic that the first big industrial test for the new Gaullist Government of Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister, was over workers' demands for protection against what they portray as a Brussels plot to destroy France's proud state monopolies and replace them with a capitalist free-for-all.

A national stoppage today by railway workers is designed to reinforce further the message from state employees, widely shared by the public, that France is in danger of selling out to alien forces

that will destroy jobs and degrade services.

A pledge by M Juppé on Monday to fight to defend "un service public à la française" has done little to quell the emotions of workers, who fear the Government will give ground at European talks this week on deregulating energy industries.

Juppé denial: M Juppé denied a report in the *Libération* newspaper yesterday that his name appeared in a judge's investigation into a bribe allegedly paid by a construction firm to the Gaullist RPR party. (Reuters)



Juppé: pledge to defend France's public services

Pretoria bureaucrats bow out

FROM MICHAEL HAMLYN IN JOHANNESBURG

THE Government of President Mandela is losing ability and experience as senior South African civil servants vote with their feet and choose early retirement.

More than 2,000 have applied, or have been allowed, to take their pensions early since the democratic elections a year ago. Many associated with the apartheid regime retired on the ground of ill-health, although commentators point out that they seemed fit enough when they were conducting secret operations against the liberation movements. Three top police

generals in the police resigned recently, citing ill-health. A special scheme, which was introduced in December, pushing affirmative action has allowed top-ranking bureaucrats to end their careers early.

The Civil Service pension scheme is under strain with 225 million rands (£40 million) already paid out and more than 75 million rands expected to be released shortly.

For decades the bureaucracy has been dominated by Afrikaners. Since the advent of the new South Africa, the

Afrikaner-run ministerial offices have been accused of delaying reforms, and holding up black empowerment.

There has been constant pressure from African National Congress MPs for the Civil Service to be more representative. Zola Skweyiya, the Minister of Public Service and Administration, said that the affirmative action plan would concentrate on promoting blacks and appointing candidates from non-governmental organisations.

Fears that the quality of service will suffer have been rejected by his staff.

Hot air

Moscow: The city's main international Sheremetyevo-2 airport was shut for emergency repairs after a heatwave buckled the runway. Temperatures soared to an unseasonable 32C (89F). (Reuters)

The Godfather

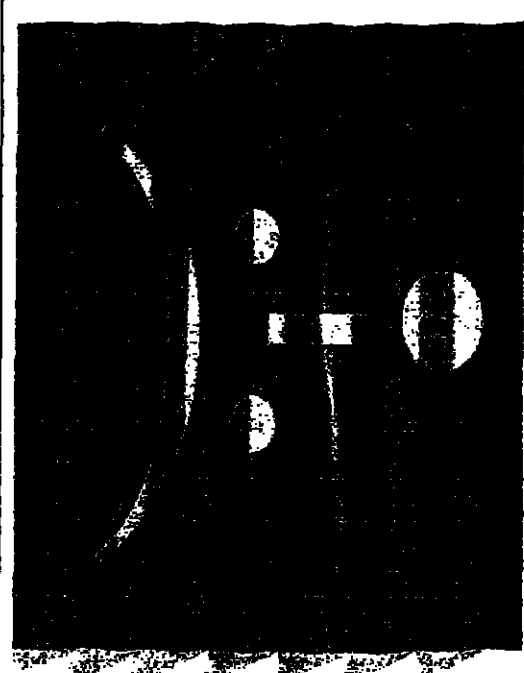
Reggio Calabria: Prosecutors want a retired Sicilian judge tried for allegedly rigging Mafia case verdicts in return for money, sex, drugs - and expensive fresh fish, judicial sources said. (Reuters)

ency debate
rare recall

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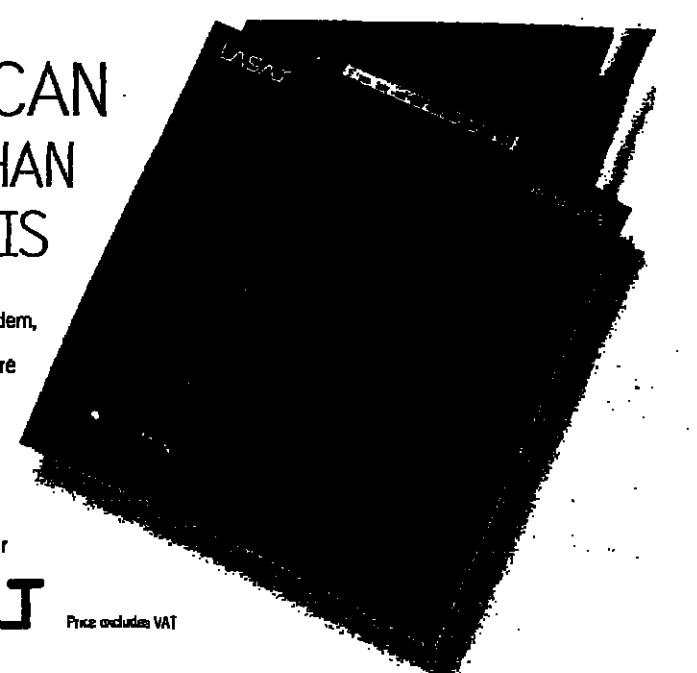
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LASAT



Clinton lies low as US bolsters Adriatic force

FROM TOM RHODES AND MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA

THE Clinton Administration, scrambling to limit increasing public humiliation over its Bosnia policy, yesterday offered heavy equipment to strengthen the embattled United Nations force in the republic and maintained the possibility of a commando-style action by US Marines to free peacekeepers taken hostage.

The White House, the prime advocate of Nato airstrikes against Bosnian Serb targets, is now facing the embarrassing consequence of its aggressive position and President Clinton has gone into virtual hiding in the disastrous aftermath of the most recent wave of strikes.

On Sunday he failed to attend a White House meeting of his top foreign policy advisers in what *The Washington Post* termed a "military, diplomatic and public relations

fiasco". The paper said there had been no thought as to what would happen next. "The new factor in the Bosnia equation is the utter public humiliation of the United States," it said.

On Monday, President Clinton omitted to mention the crisis during a Memorial Day speech to a military audience at the Arlington national cemetery in Virginia. He chose to ignore reporters' questions at a subsequent White House ceremony.

Mr Clinton is on the defensive, and with reason. His critics contend that his pressure for airstrikes was inspired as much by presidential politics as any well-planned military strategy.

Television pictures showing British, French and even Rus-

sian peacekeepers held hostage serve to highlight America's lack of commitment to the UN mission in the Balkans.

Exactly how much Mr Clinton was driven by domestic political considerations is impossible to say, but this would certainly not be his only recent US foreign policy initiative inspired at least partly by his looming re-election campaign, and not the only one threatening to go badly awry.

The White House yesterday signalled the possibility of a commando raid by US Marines to liberate the UN hostages. A rapid reaction force, consisting of 2,000 US Marines and other commando units, is currently heading from Sardinia to the Adriatic.

"It has never been ruled out," said Mike McCurry, the

White House spokesman. "We don't rule in or out options."

Warren Christopher, the US Secretary of State, said he would not want to encourage speculation that such an action was likely.

William Perry, the US Defence Secretary, said: "I don't want to speculate on what the Marines might do while there, but I want to emphasise again they are there as a precautionary measure and as a part of the routine deployment of these forces."

Mr Perry also announced that Washington had offered to send various types of equipment to Bosnia, including armoured personnel carriers, helicopters and night vision equipment, to help in the future regrouping of peacekeepers.

Although the Pentagon has talked of sending 25,000 US soldiers into the region to assist in any future evacuation of UN forces, it is seen as a last resort. President Clinton has no wish to involve himself in a war that could sink his political ambitions for a second presidency.

The Administration has attempted to divert blame for the hostage-taking from Washington. State Department officials said the UN was supposed to have withdrawn its unarmed troops a week before the first Nato attack took place.

They said incompetence on the ground or a lack of clarity in the orders resulted in failure to protect the peacekeepers. One senior adviser criticised the UN for taking "insufficient precautions" in preventing the soldiers from being taken hostage.

While on the one hand laying blame at the door of the UN, American attempts to find a leadership role over Bosnia continued to highlight their isolation. Mr Christopher argued that air power must remain an option and that the UN forces should stay in place to protect the increasingly discredited "safe areas", but was unable to offer anything other than logistical support, moral persuasion and praise for the British and French, the two largest UN contingents on the ground.

Simon Jenkins, page 14
Leading article, page 15

People of Belgrade focus hopes on end to sanctions

FROM EVE-ANN PRENTICE
DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT
IN BELGRADE

SERBIA

THEY are digging for victory at Belgrade airport, by growing vegetables and rearing chickens within the perimeter to offset the effects of United Nations sanctions.

Although international air links resumed last October, the airport is still a sad shadow of its former self. The attempt to make the under-used site productive is just one of the many signs of a patchwork economy now dominating Serb lives.

The desire to see a political settlement and an end to sanctions had almost overridden Belgrade citizens' sense of solidarity with Bosnian Serbs, until last week's airstrikes. The raids on Pale produced indignation at what Belgrade Serbs see as discrimination.

However, even in the few days since the first UN soldiers were chained up at ammunition depots in the Bosnian Serb heartland, the desire to see an end to sanctions has again begun to dominate the daily lives of



Milosevic "toying with international community"

ordinary people in Serbia. Strong rumours abound that Robert Frasure, the American envoy, is about to return to Belgrade to finalise a deal with President Milosevic. Aleksandr Zotov, the Russian envoy, held unofficial talks with the Serbian leader yesterday as part of Moscow's effort to persuade him to isolate Bosnian Serbs in return for suspending sanctions.

Many intellectuals in the

city, however, believe a deal is as far away as ever and that Mr Milosevic is only toying with the international community.

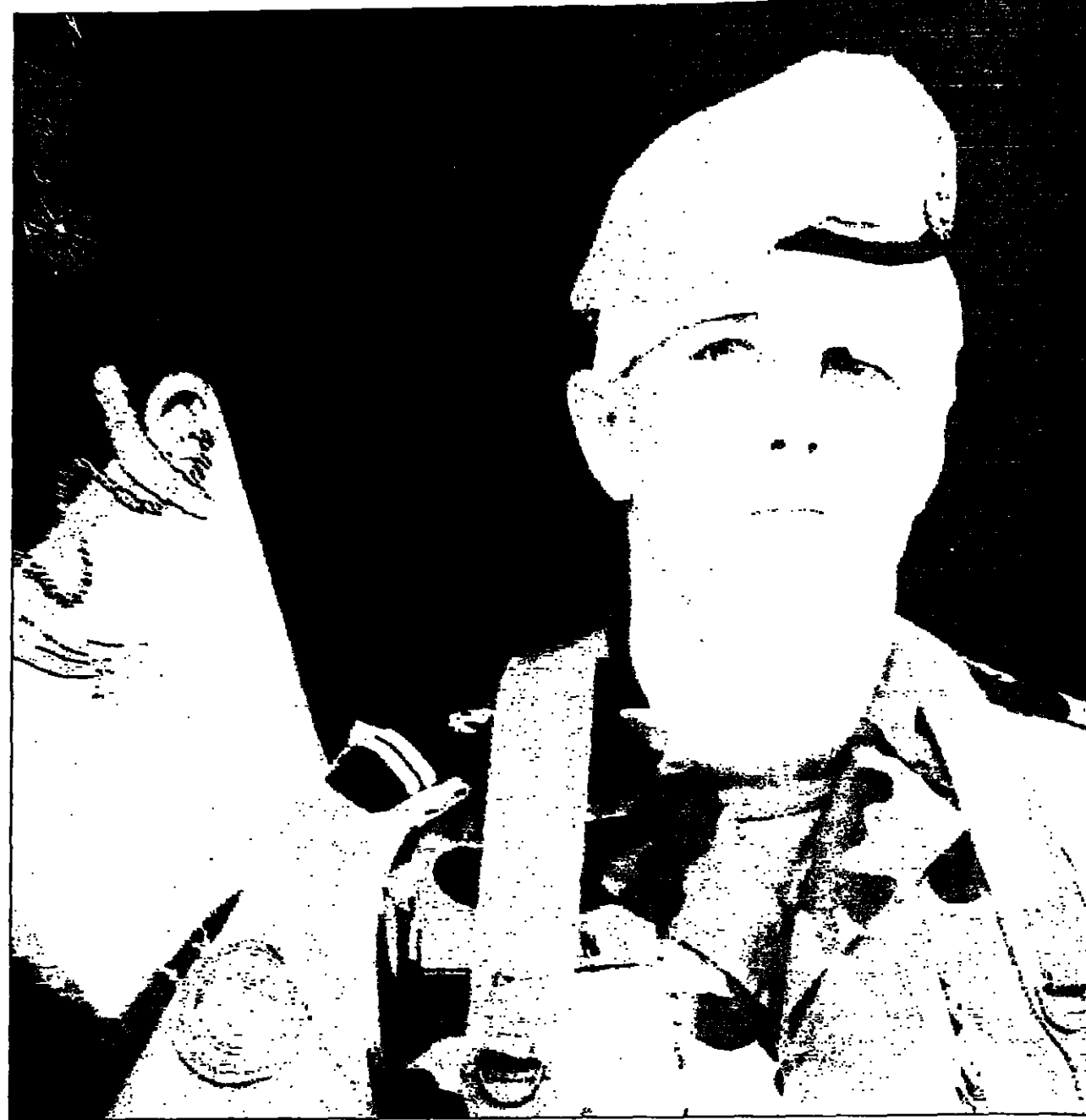
"I don't want to live in an uncivilised world where peacekeepers are taken hostage," a senior Belgrade civil servant said. "Milosevic would sell his own brother."

Branislav Grubatic, an independent political analyst, said: "People are tired. Milosevic needs a lifting of sanctions to lift the people."

The effects of the sanctions means that many will offer to paint a doctor's living room in exchange for medicine, or kill a pig and offer half the carcass.

There is little sympathy for the UN hostages. "The UN are seen as strange, uninvited," said the Belgrade civil servant. "They have a lot of money to spend, but one effect is that flats have become a lot more expensive to rent."

One of the ironies of the sanctions is that a toy shop in central Belgrade sells tin models of US Air Force jets — but there are no Yugoslav models available.



A wounded French soldier attends a memorial service in Sarajevo for two of his comrades killed on Saturday

Left backs tough Chirac line

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN PARIS

FRANCE

AS FRENCH warships were steaming off Croatia yesterday, opposition leaders in Paris gave their backing to President Chirac's efforts to secure the release of the hostages in Bosnia-Herzegovina and give new muscle to the United Nations forces there.

Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister, consulted leaders of the Socialist and other blocs in Parliament before a debate that is expected to endorse M Chirac's twin-track approach of diplomacy and military resolve. Claude Estier, the Socialist leader in the Senate, said: "Our goals are the same: free the hostages and redefine the mission of the United Nations Protection Force". Elisabeth Guigou, a leading

Socialist, said: "Everything must be done to bring the Bosnian Serbs to the negotiating table through diplomatic and military pressure."

In contrast to Britain, France has remained discreet about its military options. An unspecified number of marine commandos are on board the warships, led by the aircraft carrier *Foch*, which M Chirac dispatched to the Adriatic on Saturday. The troops are equipped with Gazelle attack helicopters carrying HOT missiles that can destroy tanks at two-and-a-half miles.

Officials said the force could be used to go to the aid of French UN forces or to help in a withdrawal. They said that France was not contemplating

a big reinforcement because it already had over 3,000 men in the Sarajevo area.

Only two weeks after his arrival in office, M Chirac is receiving solid support from the public and media for his handling of the crisis, although there are signs that patience may soon run thin. Commentators have begun noting the President's public silence and wondering when M Chirac, a former soldier with an image as a tough leader, will speak out. "Tell us, M le Président, why have you lost your voice?" the daily *Info-Matin* asked yesterday. France, it said, was "awaiting

the first tough act from the Gaullist President".

M Chirac's staff say that the President has been in direct command of the Bosnian crisis since Friday, when he ordered a complete change in the military policy. By passing the UN hierarchy, he instructed French commanders to accept no further humiliation and cede no more ground.

The first result was the operation to recapture the Sarajevo bridge. M Chirac, staff said, took full responsibility for the deaths of the two soldiers as unavoidable casualties of battle. The deaths brought to 29 the number of French personnel lost since France first sent troops to former Yugoslavia in 1992.

Russia poised to forge links with alliance

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

NATO foreign ministers are holding their breath for what they expect to be historic Russian proposals for a military partnership programme with the alliance and an agreement for a special security relationship between Moscow and allied nations.

Andrei Kozyrev, the Russian Foreign Minister, has indicated to Willy Claes, the Nato Secretary-General, that he has brought two crucial documents with him from Moscow that will make Russia a full member of the Partnership for Peace, which offers consultation on security issues and military training links.

Moscow was about to present its proposals for joining the partnership last year. At the last moment, however, Mr Kozyrev refused to sign because of Russian anger over Nato's proposal to extend membership of the transatlantic alliance to Central and Eastern European nations. Nato ministers were yesterday trying not to seem too confident that Mr Kozyrev would produce the necessary documents this time. President Yeltsin told Nato last year that Russia would join the partnership, and the alliance has since waited for Kremlin proposals on how he wants to develop the relationship.

The second document, on building an "enhanced dialogue" between the alliance



Kozyrev: has brought documents with him

and Moscow, is viewed by the Nato ministers as another crucial step in improving relations with Russia. Although Moscow is still concerned about Nato expansion, the British view that the alliance needs to take a measured and cautious approach towards inviting new members will have pleased the Russians.

Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, said that the progress towards Nato enlargement should be "steady, not dramatic and not provocative". While Russia would not be allowed to hold a veto over Nato expansion, the alliance needed to be understanding towards its concerns, he said.

Kohl takes firm stance against UN withdrawal

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

GERMANY

HELMUT KOHL, the German Chancellor, yesterday joined Tony Blair, the Labour leader, in condemning the taking of hostages in Bosnia, and said that the lesson of the Balkan crisis was that Europe should co-operate more closely on foreign and security policy.

The two men, meeting for the first time, displayed a remarkable measure of agreement on the future of Europe — the subject of a speech delivered by Mr Blair in Bonn. They were also at one on Bosnia. Herr Kohl condemned the "criminal action" of the Bosnian Serb leadership in taking hundreds of United Nations peacekeepers hostage.

Herr Kohl said the Bosnian Serbs had made themselves "total outsiders" in the international community, but emphasised that the troops should remain for as long as possible. "We are still of the view that a continued presence of UN soldiers on the spot is essential, and that a withdrawal would be catastrophic for the people on all sides."

The German cabinet yesterday worked out details of the role of its military if a withdrawal became necessary. Tornado jets would be made available, and about 2,000 troops including 600 members of medical teams, could be despatched. No German tanks or heavy artillery would be earmarked for a withdrawal. Mr Blair, addressing the

Friedrich Ebert Foundation, which is close to the Social Democratic Party, said: "If we are unable to co-operate on a problem as grave as this on our own doorstep, then our common foreign and security policy will not be credible."

A Labour government, he said, would try to make a reality of a common foreign and security policy. However, it would not press for more institutional changes. "What is required is an act of political will so that we can achieve something more than a policy of the lowest common denominator. If we cannot make progress in this way, then we ought to consider an arrangement where smaller groups of states are empowered by the others to act on a particular issue or area, from North Africa to Bosnia."

He gave full support to the Government in sending reinforcements to Bosnia to protect British forces. "We have always made it clear that withdrawal is an option that we keep open if the local commanders advise us that the risk to our forces has become unacceptable. But there is no question of us putting forward the notion of withdrawal in response to the taking of hostages. If anything, it should lead us to an even tougher enforcement of the UN mandate."

Aid grinds to a halt

Geneva: The escalating tension in Bosnia-Herzegovina has prompted the United Nations to suspend aid convoys to Sarajevo and to Muslim enclaves in Bosnia, Ron Redmond, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, said yesterday, warning that the humanitarian situation could rapidly worsen.

"The food situation is desperate in Bihac," Mr Red-

mond said. "It could become quickly critical in Sarajevo". The last UN aid convoys reached the besieged Bosnian capital before Nato's airstrikes on Bosnian Serb targets, giving the population two weeks' supplies. The Bosnian Serbs have closed Sarajevo airport to humanitarian flights since April 8. So far, however, no UN aid workers had been threatened by the Bosnian Serbs. Mr Redmond

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UN seeks out billets and bases for reinforcements

FROM MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT, IN NOORDWIJK, THE NETHERLANDS

THE substantial British reinforcements earmarked for Bosnia will pose a logistical nightmare for the United Nations commanders in the former Yugoslavia.

Potentially, Britain will be sending about 6,700 troops, 24 105mm light guns and 110 helicopters, consisting of 50 Lynxes, 24 Gazelles, 18 Chinooks and 18 Pumas.

Although this force may be scaled down, depending on whether the whole of 24 Air Mobile Brigade is sent or elements of it, Bosnia, and initially Croatia as the point of entry, is going to be overwhelmed with additional heavy equipment and troops.

Since the order to send reinforcements only came from the Government on Sunday, the Ministry of Defence, Nato partners and the UN, has had little time to discuss where the new troops will be located.

BRITISH OPTIONS

The biggest dilemma will be where to base the helicopters which will be the key asset in the substantially beefed-up British UN force in Bosnia. Military sources said the current thinking was that the helicopters would have to be located along the Dalmatian coast in Croatia.

Some of the heaviest equipment, such as the three mine-clearing Armoured Vehicle Royal Engineers (AVREs) and three Chieftain bridgelayers,

will join equipment already in Bosnia with 21 Engineer Regiment in locations such as Tomislavgrad and Gornji Vakuf.

The 24 105mm light guns, half of which are being deployed in the first two phases of the reinforcement, the other half when 24 Air Mobile Brigade is sent to Bosnia, will have to be located in a central area, ready to be flown by helicopter to anywhere British troops require immediate protection. Some of the guns could be held at Vitez, the main British camp in central Bosnia, although space is limited. The largest logistical headache for Lieutenant-Gen-

eral Rupert Smith, the UN Commander in Bosnia, will be where to base 24 Air Mobile Brigade.

General Smith and his predecessor, Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose, realised the importance of having a mobile reserve force, backed by heavy firepower, which could be used to protect or rescue UN troops.

General Rose was unable to form a large reserve force because of a lack of troops. However, he earmarked some British units equipped with Warrior armoured infantry fighting vehicles for an instant-reaction role, although he never had the helicopter back-up to mount a credible rescue force.

Now Nato's latest thinking, which emerged more clearly at the alliance's foreign ministers' meeting in the Dutch coastal resort of Noordwijk yesterday, was that it might be possible to combine British, French and American units to form a Bosnia-based and carrier-based flexible rapid-reaction force that could intervene when called upon by General Smith.

The combined force would consist of 24 Air Mobile Brigade with its large contingent of heavy-lift helicopters and 12 105mm light guns, the French reinforcements, with their combat helicopters, armoured vehicles and troops on board the aircraft carrier, *Foch*, and the 2,000 American Marines sent as part of a naval group based around the carrier *USS Theodore Roosevelt*.

Since the Americans have always shown reluctance to send ground troops to Bosnia, it is envisaged that their Marines would only be used in the event of a crisis where UN troops would require rapid evacuation.

Although 24 Air Mobile Brigade, based at Colchester, is only on standby for Bosnia, it is now clear that it answers precisely the requirement laid down by General Smith for a rapid-reaction force at his disposal.

The most likely location for the 5,500-strong brigade would also be in a central Bosnian area such as Vitez, because the influx of so many troops would not be seen as a hostile act by the Muslims and Croats who live in this region of Bosnia.

The creation of a mobile reserve force with substantial assets, in addition to the 200 Nato aircraft based in Italy, would present a much more potent threat to the Bosnian Serbs, without having to change either the UN mandate or alter to any significant degree the present rules of engagement. These already allow "all necessary means" to be deployed to safeguard the UN's mission and its personnel in Bosnia.



Lance Corporal Susan Taylor, left, and Private Tracey Farr, of 30th Signals, board an RAF Hercules transport plane in Lynham, Wiltshire, yesterday for Split, Croatia

Women join advance party

BY RICHARD DUCE

BRITISH FORCES

DEPLOYMENT of British troops to protect their colleagues in Bosnia began in earnest yesterday.

Nineteen men of 19 Regiment, Royal Artillery, were among the first to fly to Split, Croatia, during the afternoon. With them went equipment, including two Land-Rovers and trailers in United Nations blue and white.

A dozen signallers from 30th Signals Regiment, including Lance Corporal Susan Taylor, 21, from Greenock, Strathclyde, and Private Tracey Farr, 24, from Aberlillery, Gwent, will form

part of a team that is setting up a satellite communications network. The reconnaissance party sent yesterday will herald the arrival later this week of artillery and further forces.

Britain plans to send about 6,500 extra troops to ensure the safety of the UN service-men. The first phase includes six 105mm light guns of 19 Field Regiment.

They will be followed by 550 troops and six more light guns from the same Colchester-based regiment. The guns, which have a range of more than ten miles, can be carried

underneath Chinook and Puma support helicopters.

The third and final phase will involve the deployment of 5,500 men from 24 Air Mobile Brigade. The brigade will be spearheaded by 1,400 airmobile troops from the 1st Battalion, the Royal Anglian Regiment, and the 1st Battalion, the Light Infantry, equipped with 84 Milan anti-tank weapon systems.

The brigade includes 11 anti-tank Lynx helicopters, 11 bat-defield support Lynx and 12 Gazelle helicopters from 3 and 4 Regiments, Army Air Corps.



Serbs refuse to relent

FROM JOEL BRAND IN SARAJEVO

HUMAN SHIELDS

BOSNIAN Serbs yesterday reaffirmed their commitment to holding more than 300 hostages until Western countries relinquish the option of Nato airstrikes. Even with the arrival in the area of the West's first real combat unit, the Serbs were showing no signs of backing down, believing the UN reinforcements and condemnation to be no more than bluster.

"These British units are beginning to arrive today," a UN official said. "There's a big difference between a Bosnian army soldier with a 60mm mortar and a British artillery battery." The Serbs are also facing threats from the War Crimes Tribunal sitting in The Hague. "The recent attacks on Tuzla and the use of 'blue helmet' hostages as human shields are clearly violations

of all the laws over which the tribunal has jurisdiction," a tribunal spokesman said yesterday.

Last week, the Serbs shelled the Tuzla "safe area," killing 67 residents in a cluster of outdoor cafes. On Monday night, the Serbs even threatened Aleksandr Ivanko, the senior UN spokesman in Sarajevo. "You should go home before it is too late," Miroslav Toholj, the Serbs' "information minister" said in a radio broadcast. "If Mr Ivanko keeps on behaving like this, he might run into an accident himself."

Undeterred, Mr Ivanko again condemned the Serbs yesterday. "The Bosnian Serb leadership continues to seek

international legitimacy, international recognition and at the same time declaring void international law and civilised rules of behaviour," the Russian official said.

The Serbs released six French troops yesterday, but only after they had abducted others from observation posts in Gorazde. "It doesn't change the overall picture," Mr Ivanko said. "They grab seven Ukrainians and they release six French."

After two days of delays, the Serbs yesterday permitted French troops to evacuate two of their dead and seven wounded in Saturday's battle for a Sarajevo bridge. The French had asked for a plane evacuation from the city's airport, but the Serbs suggested that they might fire on the aircraft.

Rose cautions West against 'over-reaction'

BY LUCY BERRINGTON

TERRORISM

THE former United Nations commander in Bosnia, Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose, yesterday condemned the taking of hostages as an act of terrorism, but warned against over-reaction.

General Rose told students at the Oxford Union: "The taking of hostages is an act of life insurance and an act of terrorism. We cannot give in to terrorism."

General Rose, 55, expressed optimism over the fate of the hostages. He said: "The problem with hostages has been experienced before. On a previous occasion about 140 hostages were taken, including 20 Britons, who disappeared off the face of the map for a week. If they had wanted to kill them they could have done."

General Rose, who left Sarajevo in January after commanding the UN peace-keeping forces for 12 months, forcefully defended the role of the UN but said it was a "constrained force" in the former Yugoslavia and a "very misunderstood organisation".

It was not the role of the UN to force a resolution in the conflict but to alleviate suffering and maintain the channels through which peace could be achieved, General Rose said.

The general refused to be drawn on the additional troops assigned to Bosnia or wider government policy. He said he was confident that the conflict could be close to resolution: "A solution to the conflict may well be closer than you think. There may come a time when one side decides it has had enough and calls it to an end."

The Bosnian Serbs had operated an efficient propaganda machine, but its power was waning, he said. "Increasingly the Bosnian Serbs will find themselves isolated with pressure being put on them from all sides. It is extremely expensive to a country caught in this type of war. The level of conflict has decreased each year and I hope it will continue to do so."

THE TIMES An evening with Baroness Thatcher



To mark the publication of her second volume of memoirs, *The Path to Power*, *The Times*, in co-operation with Dillons, invites readers to an evening with Lady Thatcher. Following the success of her first *Times/Dillons* forum, when she spoke about *The Downing Street Years*, Lady Thatcher will now turn her attention to the years leading up to her premiership. She will discuss her childhood in Grantham, the profound influence of her father, her marriage to Denis, her early career as a politician and her determined rise to power. She will also give characteristically forthright opinions on some of the century's leading political figures. The forum will be chaired by Peter Stothard, Editor of *The Times*, and will offer those attending the opportunity to question Lady Thatcher.

The forum will be held at Westminster Central Hall, Storey's Gate, London SW1 on Tuesday, June 13 at 7.30pm. Tickets are £10 each (concessions, £7.50) and are available by ringing 0171-915 6613, by faxing the coupon below to 0171-580 7680, or by sending it, with your remittance, to Dillons the Bookstore, 82 Gower Street, London WC1E 6EQ, where tickets can also be purchased.

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As British Gas shareholders gather for a stormy meeting, Giles Coren meets the scourge of big-spending directors

The woman with her sights on Cedric

One of the most pressing issues in British industry since the start of privatisation will be put to the vote today, at the annual general meeting of British Gas shareholders, in what is expected to be the stormiest gathering of its kind in City history.

The sensitive subject of massive payments to directors — irrespective of performance — has generated a surge of interest from shareholders, and the meeting has been moved to the 12,500-capacity London Arena to accommodate them. The notion of the shareholders' democracy is taking its first steps towards becoming a reality.

Resolution 13 ("we call upon the directors of British Gas to revise its remuneration policy...") has been

'Our clients demand that British Gas justify these salaries'

tabled by the relatively unknown Pensions Investment Research Consultants Limited (Pirc). It has enraged the perceived villains of the piece, the chief executive, Cedric Brown (£475,000 a year basic), and the chairman, Dick Giordano (£450,000 for a part-time non-executive role).

Frequently involved in questions of ethics, environmental damage, and industrial relations, Pirc has been seen by traditionalists as a right-on lobby group too small to advise the big boys in multi-million dollar matters. But its maverick approach has ploughed furrows in many an expensively coiffed brow. It is headed by Anne Simpson, a 37-year-old former journalist and mother of three, who is married to an academic. She earns £35,000 a year as joint managing director and pays her own non-executives nothing.

On Bank Holiday Monday the Pirc office in Clerkenwell was empty except for Mrs Simpson and her five-year-old daughter Frances, who was drawing pictures of animals and piling half-melted chocolate biscuits on the computers. In between searing condemnations of multinational corporations, the managing director paused occasionally to help Frances to spell words like "bear".

"We were set up in 1986 after a group of pension funds had become unhappy with the traditional, sell high, buy low, City approach. They had long-term liability, and after the takeover and merger boom of the late 1980s, and the collapse of British industry, felt they needed to broaden their investment horizons."

At the same time, a heightened public interest in dealings with South Africa put ethical issues high on the agenda. "One could see that, while investment there might turn some fast cash, there was the probability of a consumer boycott in the long term, which would destroy share prices."

"Similarly, investment in a company that has a reckless attitude to toxic waste disposal may be attractive to the short-term investor with red braces and slicked-back hair, but a pension holder starts payments at, say, 18, and it is 30 years before he gets a return. In that time pollutants could have leaked out, poisoned a water sys-

tem, and resulted in the company being sued out of business. We are about shareholder responsibility. If shareholders demand a responsible attitude to pollution or politics — for the sake of their investment — the board of directors must listen."

Her company, despite a staff of only 15 and a turnover smaller than Cedric Brown's salary, wields a great deal of power. "Pension funds are Britain's largest shareholders. Our clients alone have assets of more than £70 billion." The power to tell them where to put their money, and what to demand of the companies they invest in, means huge influence over British business.

And Pirc is fiercely independent. "We conduct research into companies that the City couldn't do. We advise our clients in the light of that. And we co-ordinate suitable action."

Action is exactly what they have co-ordinated against British Gas. "Our clients were becoming concerned about these payments —



Anne Simpson: the power to tell pension funds where to put their money, and what to demand of the companies they invest in, gives her huge influence over business

they felt British Gas had to justify handing their money over to the board.

"It was also classic bad timing. The last round of pay increases (£206,000 extra for Mr Brown, up to £58,000 for other directors) was announced just as British Gas had cut showroom workers' pay, slashed the workforce by a third, and were experiencing a 76 per cent rise in customer complaints. The result was bound to be poor industrial relations and, ultimately, an adverse effect on share values. I put it to Giordano in a meeting, and he wasn't interested. Hence the resolution."

Pirc is not about revolutionary demands for workers' equality. It

is not even about altruism. It is about making money.

"We are not what most people think of as investment advisers," Mrs Simpson says. "At least, not in the inhuman, unsocial hours, hyperactive sense."

We have full maternity and paternity leave, we offer sick pay not only for sick staff, but also for those who have to look after ill relatives. Everyone works flexi-time and has a laptop so they can work from home if the nanny is sick, or something."

The fact that the company is headed by a woman has created particular interest. "I'd rather that

wasn't an issue," Mrs Simpson says. "But I suppose a lot of directors are uncomfortable being challenged by a woman. They are an exclusively male brood, and negotiating with me is unusual for them. If I go into a meeting with a male director of Pirc the assumption is that I am his wife or his secretary."

"As a woman, I am not trapped in an aggressive mode of business, and the result is that male directors seem to think they can charm me out of my stance. They say things like 'you are a very pleasant young woman', and I have to explain, that it is not a personal thing when I scrutinise the way their company works. My pleas-

aneness, or otherwise, is incidental."

And what about Dick Giordano, whom she first met to first air her concerns about British Gas? "I think he sees himself as something of a ladies' man, a bit of a charmer." Is he?

"I suppose so. He definitely launched a charm offensive, which I suspect he doesn't do with men. Men seldom try to charm each other. But women in the City can't be part of the old boy network — which has had its day anyway. If companies continue to take the macho approach then fights will always arise, like this one, and investors will be at risk."

"It is nice to see all the things

that we stand for coming together. Building it up was something to do with my upbringing — a Catholic conscience and five brothers and sisters in Hampshire. If you saw something was wrong you didn't just turn a blind eye." At St Hilda's, Oxford, she was a bit of campaigner, and then worked for Oxfam in Latin America.

"We are rocking the boat at Pirc. We want to change the way money is used, to get hold of the cash that is in the City and do something good with it. I hope that the epitaph for us will be that we not only said all the right things, but we did them as well."

And so Anne Simpson heads for the arena, to take on the lions.

Lamar Alexander is unknown, but Ted Welch aims to make him US President. Martin Fletcher meets a formidable salesman

Hi there. We need to raise \$20m...

It is mid-morning, and on the 29th floor of a Nashville skyscraper that he half-owns Ted Welch tilts back in his turquoise leather swivel chair, legs outstretched, and launches into his fifteenth telephone call of the day. He appears to be surveying the magnificent view of Tennessee's capital beyond the glass wall of his office, but is actually focused on a still grander vision. He aims to make Lamar Alexander, the state's former Governor and erstwhile Education Secretary, America's next President.

Mr Welch is a 61-year-old property developer. He is also one of America's top political fundraisers, a veteran of the Reagan and Bush presidential campaigns, and his prey at this moment is a wealthy Virginia lawyer capable of organising a \$500-a-head reception who has yet to commit to a Republican candidate.

Mr Welch dismisses two of Mr Alexander's rivals, Senator Phil Gramm of Texas and California's Governor Pete Wilson. He invites the lawyer to fly down for a select dinner

at Mr Alexander's home. He urges him to become a national vice-chairman of Mr Alexander's finance committee, a title bestowed on anyone who pledges to raise \$200,000. He chats, laughs and answers questions for 20 minutes, then rings off. "I've got him," Mr Welch says as he dials his next target. "He's not totally aware I've got him, but I'm 99 per cent sure he'll help us."

It may be eight months until any votes are cast, but the first real primary for the Republican presidential nomination is being fought now — a battle for money that has, Mr Welch contends, already eliminated all the Republican hopefuls save Robert Dole, the Senate leader, and Messrs Gramm, Wilson and Alexander.

In the past, lesser-known candidates such as Senators Richard Lugar or Arlen Specter could pour their limited resources into Iowa or New Hampshire, knowing success

in those opening contests would bring money flooding in. But not in 1996. California has advanced its primary from June to March, transforming the primary season into a 44-day blitz, and those who embark without huge resources to organise and advertise in two dozen states simultaneously will not survive beyond the first few days.

Mr Welch and a distinguished team of fellow fundraisers must raise \$20 million this year, or \$55,000 every single day, to make their man a serious player — a massive challenge considering Mr Alexander's relative anonymity and the \$1,000 legal limit on individual donations.

Almost everything is subverted to that end. Mr Alexander will meet precious few voters this year because he will be too busy wooing potential donors. He attended 25 fundraising dinners between March 6 and April 15, and has



Hands-on operator: Ted Welch at a fundraising dinner

22 more between May 24 and June 30. In all he will attend 300 fundraising events and meetings during 1995, spending four or five days a week on the road and hundreds more hours begging by telephone.

At this stage there are no limousines, private jets or Secret Service details to lend glamour to the slog.

"He is willing to do whatever I ask him to do," says Mr Welch, though Mr Alexander

has already complained of feeling like a "trained dog". Four Republican heavyweights — Dan Quayle, Richard Cheney, William Bennett and Jack Kemp — considered what Mr Kemp labelled the "grotesqueries" of fundraising on this scale so appalling they decided not to run at all.

Mr Alexander can at least sustain himself through this demeaning marathon by dreaming of the Oval Office, but why Mr Welch should put himself through it is more perplexing. He is unpaid. He will not be publicly feted if his candidate wins, though Mr Alexander would stand little chance without him. He is uninterested in the ambassadorships or political appointments that were his for the asking when Ronald Reagan and George Bush won the presidency, and he certainly does not do it for the reflected glory — his desk drawers are stuffed with pictures of him

with the great and good, but there are none on the walls.

Mr Welch grows distinctly resentful when pressed on the question. "Some people play golf. I raise money," he says. He does it because "it's important", and because he fervently believes his old Tennessee friend is the best man to lead America. Another reason, perhaps, is that this former door-to-door Bible salesman revels in his mastery of the game.

After 24 years of political mendacity, Mr Welch knows the foibles, vanities and susceptibilities of literally thousands of Republican donors. He knows who will respond to a personal call from the candidate, who hankers for some vacuous campaign title, who craves a Caribbean ambassadorship. He knows whom to stroke and whom to pressure.

He has no computer on his desk, just endless lists of

names and numbers, some with instructions in the margin. One man has agreed to sell 12 tickets for a fundraising dinner — "Will he sell 20?" Another "has agreed to help sell. Just a call to let him know how important he is to the effort and get him energised."

For hours the phone hangs like an appendage from Mr Welch's right ear as he congratulates a carpet tycoon on the birth of a son, calls a multi-millionaire Californian investor wooed from the Wilson camp "to thank him for all he's doing for Lamar", and persuades the head of a local recording company to line up support from Nashville's country music stars.

And so the day wears on. Mr Welch tirelessly cajoling, massaging and exhorting America's wealthy from his tower in the heartland. He is unconcerned that his candidate still scarcely registers on the public radar screen. Mr Alexander has already banked \$7 million and looks sure to make the final cut, at which point his actual message will begin to matter.

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MARTIN BEDDALL

A marriage of style and glamour

If girly froth is not your usual style, steer clear of it for the big day and follow the fashion pack into the Fifties

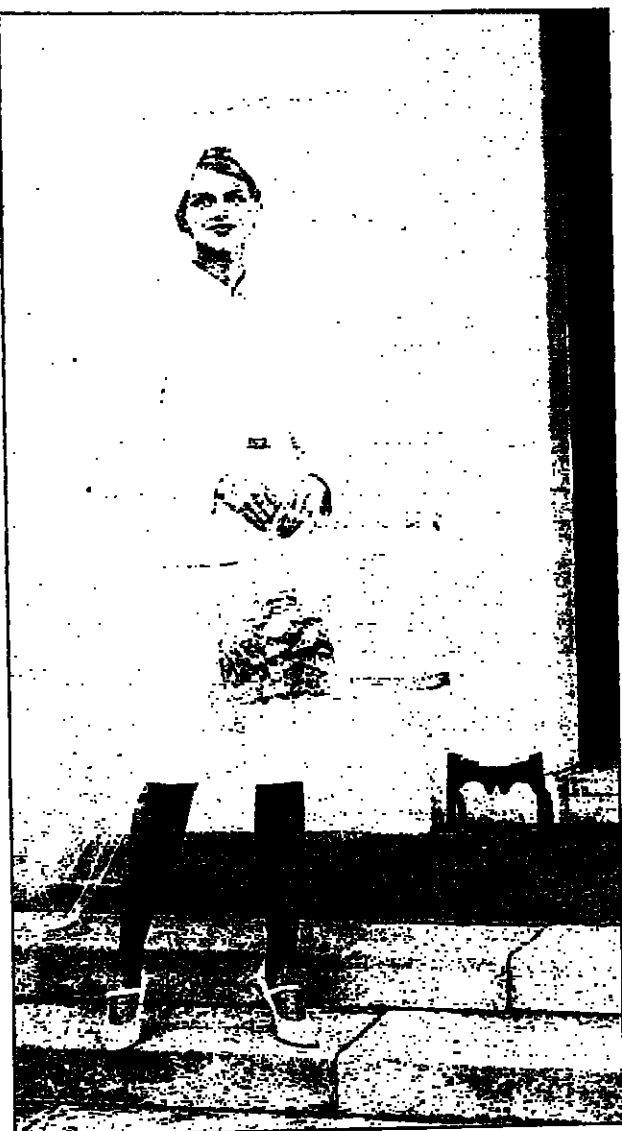
Recently a female friend telephoned and, just before she hung up, said quickly: "Oh yes, and by the way I'm getting married." Naturally, I asked what she was going to wear. There was silence for a few moments before she admitted she had absolutely no idea. "Please don't make me think about it," she said.

There can be few brides-to-be who have not agonised over the choice of wedding dress. My friend, a high-profile magazine editor with a look as formidable as her personality, had come completely unstuck. Should she choose something understated and modern which she could wear for more than one day in her life? Or should she be swept along on an ivory tulle cloud and find herself looking like a cross between the Princess of Wales and a Mont Blanc dessert?

It seems that even the sanest, best organised women turn into rambling wrecks when faced with the big decision for the big day. Everyone has something to say. My friend had received no end of advice but was no nearer to finding the answer.

Of course, there is no simple answer. However, some straightforward guidelines can help.

"The most successful wedding dresses are simply an extension of a woman's every-



Fashion
IAN R. WEBB

day style, albeit a highly glamorised version," says Lisa Armstrong, the associate editor of *Vogue* magazine. "If you have never shown any tendency towards girly and frothy, then don't even contemplate it for your wedding day."

Armstrong maintains that simple does not have to mean boring. When she married, in 1988, she chose an understated white suit (dress and jacket) by Calvin Klein for her register office ceremony, and then changed into an ankle-length ivory column with an organza fichu neckline in the style of Romeo Gigli ("I ripped out a picture from *Vogue* - it wasn't a wedding dress, it was just a dress I liked"), made for her by the designer Belle Fergusson.

"Keep the dress simple so that it still looks OK when you look back at the photographs years later," Armstrong says. "It will date, but at least it won't look embarrassing."

It is vital to think about the whole look. The bouquet has to work with the dress. There is no point in having great elements - great shoes, a great veil - if it doesn't work as an overall picture.

The silhouette is most important. "The same rules apply to wedding dresses as anything else," Armstrong says. "Wear a shape which flatters your body and makes the best of your qualities."

Somewhat surprisingly, hundreds of metres of white frothy tulle worked into a ballerina-length skirt can produce a strong silhouette. A corseted bodice is good for sleek shaping, but make sure it is comfortable as you'll be

wearing it for most of the day. Remember, you need not choose a fancy gown for a church ceremony, or something simple for a register office - any of the outfits on today's page would fit either. Whatever dress you decide on, always look at yourself in a mirror from every angle.

because everyone else will when you walk down the aisle - the most critical catwalk a woman will ever tread.

If you want to follow in the footsteps of the fashion pack, editors, stylists and models are almost unanimously choosing classic, understated gowns. As with fashion itself, wedding dresses now have a mood of 1950s couture. Designers who are creating gowns fit for Grace Kelly include John Galiano, Hardy Amies, Valentino, Catherine Walker, Amanda Wakeley and Bruce Oldfield. If your budget doesn't run to a designer dress follow Armstrong's tip - take a picture to a dressmaker.

Good shoes are important. They should match the look of the dress. If possible have them made from the same fabric. Manolo Blahnik (0171-352 8622) and Jimmy Choo (0171-249 2382) do the best. Hair and make-up are equally important, but don't try a radically different hairdo or colour. If you are getting it cut, do so at least a week beforehand. Make-up should be merely an enhancement of your everyday look. You want to look your best.

With this thought in mind, Armstrong strongly advises black and white wedding photographs: "They're much more flattering."



ABOVE: White tulle skirt, satin bustier and diamond buckle belt, £3,800, Isabel Kristensen, 33 Beauchamp Place, SW3. White sandals, £39.99, Carvela, Selfridges, Oxford Street, W1. Diamond tiara with faux pearls, £78, Butler & Wilson, 20 South Molton Street, W1. 189 Fulham Road, SW3. White tulle worn as a wrap, £3.50 a metre, Selfridges, as above.

ABOVE LEFT: White stub silk skirt, £613; white silk skirt, £328; belt, £40. Prada, Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-623 8816). Double tiered veil, £120, The Wedding Shop, 171 Fulham Road, SW3. Faux snakeskin shoes, £85.50, Russell & Bromley, 24-25 New Bond Street, W1 and branches. Clear PVC bag, £24.95, Dollargrand, Fenwicks, New Bond Street, W1. Flowers in bag, from £3.95 each, Selfridges, as above.

FAR LEFT: White organza trench coat, £520; silk satin slip dress, £380, Benny Ong. Cotton gloves, £11.95, Fenwicks, as above. Diamond drop earrings, £48, Butler & Wilson, as above. Top hat, £90, The Wedding Shop, as above. Bouquet, from £65, The Flower People, 18 Ingle Place, SW8 (0171-498 9407).

LEFT: Cream short-sleeved jacket, £302; matching long skirt, £208; cream sandals, £130, Bella Freud, Pellicano, 63 South Molton Street, W1. Cream brocade hat with netting trim, to order, Philip Treacy, 69 Elizabeth Street, SW1 (0171-258 9605). Boudal bouquet from £65, Rob Van Helden, Unit 2, Costfield Warehouses, rear of Bovis House, Townmead Road, SW6 (0171-371 5788).

Photographs by JONATHAN BOOKALLIL. Hair and make-up by Micki Gardener.

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Where blacks can't be wrong

False charges of racism must be rebutted, says John Ware

The scene is Room 101 at Hackney Town Hall. Housing director Bernard Crofton is on "trial", accused of racism towards a fellow senior council officer, a West African, Sam Yeboah. If Crofton loses, he may never work in local government again.

Yeboah is the £60,000-a-year head of the personnel department, which processes job applications at Hackney. The council has been riddled with corruption, from housing and social security fraud to organised squatting. But there is one type of fraud that threatens to spread through the council like a cancer, eating away at its foundations: the recruitment of staff with bogus qualifications. This fraud has been prevalent in the West African community. Crofton has complained that Yeboah's department has not done enough to tackle it.

Yeboah says such criticisms are motivated by racism. Hackney's white chief executive, Jerry White, agrees. And that is why he is now acting as "prosecutor" before two "judges" presiding over a disciplinary committee. Both judges are members of the ruling Labour Party.

Crofton's anti-racist credentials are impeccable. He has been in the vanguard of the anti-racist movement since the 1960s. To the suggestion that he is a racist, Ken Livingstone, the former leader of the GLC, says: "I can't think of anyone in local government I'd be less likely to make that statement of."

Linda Bellos, the black lesbian former leader of Lambeth council, also supports him. But now, in Room 101, White displays his verbal dexterity. First he pays tribute to what he calls Crofton's "career-long concern for matters of race equality... it is an impressive record". He says he does not believe he is a racist "in the political views that he holds, or in the ideological values that he espouses... Yet... his actions in respect of Mr Yeboah do represent racial harassment in this case. I have no doubt."

So — Bernard Crofton is not a racist, but he is guilty of racist behaviour. It is illogical, mad, Kafkaesque. When Crofton challenged him earlier to cite a single remark that indicated a racist attitude in the four years they'd worked together, White replied: "Of course not, Bernard. You're far too clever for that!"

In any proper court of law, evidence from the Thought Police would be inadmissible. But this is a race trial at Hackney, where the burden of proof has been reversed. There is a presumption of guilt on Bernard Crofton. The burden is on him to prove that the allegations he made about Yeboah were true — or that he didn't say them. Otherwise there can be no explanation — other than racial harassment — for his behaviour.

Crofton says he did not harass Yeboah. But he certainly had a bone to pick with him. In the autumn of 1990, 18 people were appointed rent recovery officers. They were selected from a total of 380 applicants. Of the successful 18, no fewer than 15 had West African names. Africans constitute only about 6 per cent of Hackney's population. Yet 83 per cent of those chosen appear to have been of West African origin. Crofton froze the posts, pending an investigation.

Some of the appointees were effectively stealing from Hackney by squatting illegally in council properties. One claimed to have worked in a housing department in Rome that didn't exist; another cited a reference from a West African doctor well known for supplying false references; at least three others claimed to have worked for fictitious housing associations. Somehow these had passed the scrutiny of Yeboah's department without so much as the twitch of a troubled brow.

When Crofton reported his suspicions, Yeboah was defensive. He complained to White that the person who should be investigated — perhaps punished — was the messenger: a black housing officer who had first raised the alarm. She had made a "malicious allegation" raising "serious doubts about the council's equal opportunities policy".

A few months later, Crofton complained again, when Yeboah's department failed to detect a deception by a West African. Applying for a housing research job, Uwa Onuoha falsely claimed to have a diploma in computer studies from Essex University. A phone call would have established that he didn't complete the course.

However, White, as chief executive, thought the whole matter should be resolved by internal investigation. The inquiry took two years, yet was preposterously shallow.

Crofton was committed for "trial" by way of the disciplinary hearing at Hackney Town Hall. It lasted three weeks, finishing at three o'clock in the morning on the last day, so that Jerry White could get away for his Caribbean holiday on time. Crofton never stood a chance. The onus was on him to prove that what he had said was true. Yet how could he? He had never said that Yeboah had been guilty of fraud, only that his department was covering it up.

But Crofton had unearthed compelling evidence of fraud that Yeboah's staff seemed incapable of stopping. To require him to go one stage further and prove that individuals were actively colluding with the fraudsters was absurd. It would have required a major police investigation.

If Britain is to develop into a truly multiracial country, whites in position of power have to stop feeling guilty. While most black people know it is not good enough to cry "racist" every time a criticism of their honesty or competence is made, there are too many middle-class whites who don't.

As Ken Livingstone says, white people must learn to be tough enough to face down false charges of racism.

In this race trial, the burden of proof is reversed



Blood and thunder

Bellicose newspapers don't have to live with the consequences of their opinions

Eliot wrote: "Between the idea / And the reality / Between the motion / And the act / Falls the Shadow."

This shadow was never bigger than now. There is a point in the move to war when the gulf that divides actors and bystanders widens to a chasm. At that moment, leaders must lead because bystanders are useless, their comments a quivering, unreasoning jelly. The past three days in Bosnia have been such a point.

Consider the predicament facing Douglas Hurd, the British commander and other United Nations forces. They are on exactly the map co-ordinate where, three years ago, they swore blind they would never be. They would not allow British troops to take sides. They would not be left vulnerable to hostage-taking. They would not expend more resources protecting themselves than protecting humanitarian aid. They would not get into positions from which they could not retreat with dignity. They would not impose peace on reluctant parties.

They have now reneged on each one of these pledges. They are this week reduced to sending troops to relieve troops, as Kitchener was sent to rescue Gordon in Khartoum. They know they must get their troops out. They know this civil war was not ready for peacekeeping when they intervened in 1992. Wiser heads also know that interventions, particularly the negotiated "re-equipment cease-fires", have prolonged the war and increased the death toll of its inevitable endgame.

This week's moves to reinforce the British and French troops are desperate. They are meant to fool the home front into believing that the UN/Nato is about to "get tough", yet they leave the Serbs convinced that they are a cover for retreat. The final obscenity is about to be unleashed: the random bombing of Serb areas as a show of force before withdrawal. World powers seem to have need of a few flies swatted and corpses counted when they have been badly stung by small powers, like the Americans in Beirut and Somalia.

Meanwhile, commanders must act. Like medieval generals, they must work out how to bring troops back from outlying "safe areas" to defensible fortresses in Sarajevo. They must negotiate a withdrawal with the maximum dignity and with as much of their kit as the Serbs or Bosnians will let them take. Last

week's insane American airstrikes on Serb positions, devoid of tactics or strategy, made this much harder. The Americans apparently vetoed a matching strike on the equally culpable Bosnian guns, so ensuring a predictable and murderous Serb retaliation. This was a replay of the April 1993 "no-fly zone" enforcement, which led to the killing of 56 Serbians. The astonishing thing about the Serbs in Bosnia is that they seem to think the Serbs will behave like gentlemen as soon as they are "taught a lesson". They will not.

Part of the strategy of withdrawal is for leaders to carry public opinion with them. Here lies a curiosity.

There is little doubt that British and French opinion is fed up with what seems a senseless escapade on the United Nations' behalf — a view shared by the UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros Ghali. That is not the view of Western commentators, who goaded the UN into military support for aid convoys back in 1992 on the grounds that the Serbian leader, President Milosevic, was another Hitler and that the future security of Europe was at stake.

The media over the past weekend have been as belligerent as at any time since Suez. To *The Independent*, escalation is imperative and withdrawal "not an option". The UN troops should go on the offensive against the Serbs to defend the enclaves. To *The Guardian*, withdrawal will discredit the UN: "the choice is now in the open". The *Daily Telegraph* agreed: "if the UN backs down from imposing its will merely to ensure the safety of its own personnel then its credibility is finally destroyed" (though yesterday the *Telegraph* was sounding a retreat). *The Times* demands that "Britain must stand up to the kidnappers", rush artillery to central Bosnia and adopt a "pro-active stance" to defend its troops' security. How artillery will defy kidnapping any better than bombing is unclear.

The *Sunday Express* calls on the

nation to unite against "these Serb savages". The *Financial Times* waffles that withdrawal has "consequences which are impossible to foresee but would probably spread well beyond Bosnia". The *Daily Express* warns John Major that he "must not hand victory to such a foe". The *Daily Mirror* says: "the price may be great, but the alternative is unthinkable", and warns against "a retreat without honour of dignity". A curiosity of the Bosnian war is that the Left is, if anything, even more bellicose than the Right.

The media damn the Serbs' General Mladic as a murderer and Radovan Karadzic as a war criminal. Both are said to need "a bloody nose" from the full might of Western power — unspecified but presumably bombs and artillery.

The media have called for a renewed diplomatic initiative, renewed determination, a renewed "message to the Serbs", a renewed commitment to peace. The armoury of the armchair general is well-stocked with abstract nouns. He can gaily shout "Rule Britannia" and sing *God Save the Queen* and "finish killing Kruger with his mouth".

America's press is even more gung-ho. *The New York Times* thought bombing the Bosnian ammunition store would somehow "nudge along the painstaking search for a diplomatic settlement". This is nonsense. It led to the retaliatory massacre of more than 70 civilians in Tuzla, the kind of retaliation that has invariably followed such bombing attacks. Writing in the same paper, Anthony Lewis uses General Westmoreland's argument from Vietnam, demanding more bombing, more troops and no retreat, in view of the horrors that the Serbs would exact upon local villages. A complete withdrawal would be "a terrifying precedent for the peace and security of Europe". The American press now sees Bosnia not as a limited humanitarian operation in a

Simon Jenkins

Alan Coren



What does a friend do when a friend's friends sneer?

In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since. "Whenever you feel like criticising anyone," he told me, "just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had."

That is as good an opening paragraph as you will ever get, but I do not offer it to you now just because you deserve the best and it is better than anything of my own I could offer. I offer it partly because today's column could not have been written without F. Scott Fitzgerald and it is therefore only fair that he should have been allowed to write a little of it himself, but mainly because there was an occasion some years ago when I might have used that opening paragraph of *The Great Gatsby* to say something better than I could say it myself, only I bottled out, and it is time to make good that omission now.

It was at a party. Not any old party, but one thrown by a man who throws better parties than even *Gatsby* ever threw, awash with classier royalty, greater statesmen, braver sportsmen, richer tycoons, hotter stars, sharper wits, all converging at a house so sumptuous as to leave any mere East Egg pleasure-dome at the post, and, what's more, the embodiment of a proprietorial dream no whit less obsessive than *Gatsby*'s own.

Do you recall the little we know of *Gatsby*'s rise to wealth and fame? Recall it now, that career of the kid from a tank town somewhere to the west, his origins hedged about with dubious rumour, his claims to an Oxford education veiled in impenetrability, his source of immense wealth a topic of snide speculation, his private life the grist of constant innuendo, and his eventual achievement a magnet for aspersions — cast, of course, by those whose gilded class he desperately aspired to join but who were prepared to offer him only associate membership, and only that for as long as he paid his dues in lavish hospitality, rich gifts, and contacts likely to line their pockets or advance their cause. Recall all this, and you will pretty soon thereafter arrive at the solution to this cheap narrative tease of mine: you will twig the owner of the waterside lawn on which I stood that evening — not to see the green light at the end of Daisy's dock, but to see the branches stir across the moon at Grantham.

I stood neither steadily, nor alone. There were a fair few of us beside Brooke's stumorous stream — the closest we had been to water all day — a broken-livered rump of the several hundred great and good who had spent the afternoon slouching bowlerhats of Jeffrey Archer's vintage Krug, and we had reeled down here in the grubby gloaming to clear our heads, and chat of this and that. And, do you know, as the time and that went back and forth, it came to me that there was a major misprint in the poem inspired here: "And in that garden, black and white, / Creep whisperers through the grass all night" should read: "And in that garden, black and white, / Creeps whisper through the grass all night". For that is how it was, just as it was at *Gatsby*'s: tongues loosened by their host's generosity were deployed to slag him off. And the core constituent of the slugging was that he was not as they were and never would be, despite his every attempt to jump the counter between.

What does a friend do, faced with the Establishment's repugnant soused? Thump a Cabinet minister? Boot a law lord into the river? And had I instead thrown the book at them, or at least its opening paragraph, was there one among them sober enough to be embarrassed by the florid irony, or sage enough, drunk or sober, to see that the greater the handicap, the greater the triumph?

These are excuses. A true friend would have both smacked a couple of conks and then gone on to lecture the rest on what was deeply wrong with the culture they sought so offensively to defend against incursion. All I did was, like the pig, get up and walk away. It is substantially late to make amends to Jeffrey now, but if anyone cares to ring and ask me whether or not they should waste £17.50 on Michael Crick's forthcoming biography, I shall do my best.

Dr in the House

THE HOUSE OF Lords will be packed to its ornate rafters today for the emergency debate on Bosnia. More than three years after he was ennobled, Lord Owen is to make his maiden speech.

The former Labour Foreign Secretary and founder of the Social Democrats has so far refrained from speaking in the Palace of Westminster during his three bitterly frustrating years as the European Union's peace negotiator.

"I always thought it would not be appropriate, given my role, to speak in a national parliament forum," he said yesterday, pausing briefly from his globe-trotting diplomacy. "But I have given this careful thought and I think it is an appropriate time, given Britain's role in the EU."

Owen will speak early in the afternoon's debate from the cross benches, but he insists he has no further political ambitions. "I am not in politics. Nothing that has happened during the last three years has made me regret that," he said. "I do not intend to recycle my own near-impossible negative position. Owen is now re-

viled by Bosnians, who refer to him as 'Lord Owen' ('W' is not recognised in Serbo-Croat). In late August, it will be three years since he succeeded Lord Carrington as "peacemaker", but he does not relish continuing in the role. "I will not be meeting that anniversary. I want to go back to being a private citizen," he said. "I really hope not to be doing this much longer."



Is there a strike, or are things back to normal?

One strictly for middle-aged hippies. The 37-acre shrine of love and peace, Woodstock, in Sullivan County, upstate New York, is coming onto the market for a nostalgic \$2 million.

Slim vols

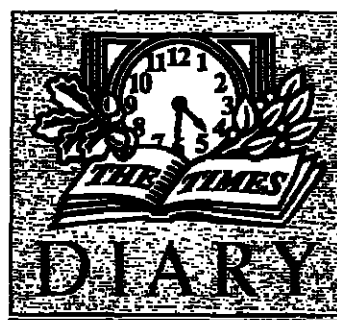
THE PUBLISHING world is taking drastic measures to ward off the effects of a paper shortage.

A memo from a senior executive has been circulated to editors at the publisher Random House. It advises its recipients of the rising price of paper, and suggests that they have a quiet word with authors about the need for brevity.

Staff at Random House are less than forthcoming, but one admitted that the paper shortage was of concern. "Obviously we're not telling authors to write short novels. But whereas five years ago, someone contracted to write 100,000 words might have got away with 200,000, they won't now."

Jersey royals

SOMEONE in the Royal Family clearly wishes he or she were Pelé, but mystery surrounds the question of who at Buckingham Palace has just ordered a 1958 Brazil football jersey (extra large).



The Palace recently requested a catalogue from the Old Fashioned Football Shirt company of Gateshead, and an order for the Brazil shirt followed last week. The size and vintage of the shirt seem to preclude its being for either of the little princes. So is it a nostalgic father or even grandfather? The Prince of Wales was aged ten at the time of Pelé's Brazilian triumph in 1958, and the Duke of Edinburgh a sprightly 37.

Others share this enthusiasm for Brazilian sides. Cherie and Tony Blair have bought a 1970 shirt for their young son, Euan.

Absent friends

PITY those MPs who fail to appear in the Commons today for the emergency debate on Bosnia — they are certain to incur the wrath

of Madam Speaker. Abandoning her car, Betty Boothroyd struggled on foot through the Atlas Mountains last month to get back to the Commons on time, and promptly upbraided less diligent MPs. She is yet again making a supreme sacrifice to occupy the Speaker's Chair.

She flew home yesterday from Cyprus, where she was booked in for ten days at Paphos's five-star Coral Beach Hotel. But with temperatures in the 90s, she refuses to let the emergency recall of Parliament wreck her holiday entirely. "She is returning tomorrow for two days and then going back to Britain," said a fellow sun-seeker. "I think she wants to work on her tan."

Screened off

THE TELEVISION writer Lynda La Plante, whose latest work for the screen concerns the female governor of a penal institution, stands accused by her neighbours in Surrey of turning their back garden into a prison yard.

She has erected a three-metre garden fence at her home in Kingston upon Thames without planning permission. "It blocks out the light from three rooms," says one neighbour. "It's a great bulky thing. I call it a prison fence." Complaints have been made to



La Plante: fenced in

the council. "The fence exceeds the height of fences which can be put up without permission, which is two metres," says a spokesman. "Lynda La Plante has been asked to submit a planning application which will be considered in the autumn." La Plante was unavailable for comment yesterday, but she looks like being in for a long, hot summer.

P.H.S

مكذبا من الرصاص



SPEAK FOR BRITAIN

Clarity, vigour and leadership must mark the Bosnia debate

Members of Parliament returning today for the emergency debate on Bosnia should be in no doubt that they carry a particular responsibility. The kidnapping of some 370 United Nations troops violates every norm of international behaviour. It is a serious escalation of a savage war, which underlines all the contradictions that have been the hall-mark of this tragedy over the past three years. The credibility of not only the United Nations but also of Nato and the transatlantic alliance is being tested as never before.

What is needed now is leadership. Today's debate is a rare occasion in which MPs of all parties must speak out with clarity and purpose. Their voices must define and underpin the British response. Only then can this country stiffen the resolve of the wavering international community.

Britain has rightly taken the lead in defying the Bosnian Serb blackmail with the prompt dispatch of 1,200 extra troops and the promise of a further 5,000. John Major was refreshingly categorical yesterday: he holds Radovan Karadzic and Gen Ratko Mladic personally responsible for the safety of British troops. He promised to do all in his power to ensure the troops' release.

More importantly, he addressed the fundamental principles at stake. Preventing a full-scale Balkan war, he insisted, was a strategic interest for all the West. Consequently a withdrawal — though not ruled out — would be a disaster for the Bosnians, the wider region, and for the UN, Nato and the European Union: the underpinnings of Britain's security and prosperity.

The Prime Minister must repeat all this today with the same vigour and clarity. He can already count on the backing of Tony Blair. The Labour leader was robust in his support in Bonn yesterday for the Government's actions on Bosnia: he and Robin Cook will throw the Opposition's weight behind Mr Major this afternoon. Paddy Ashdown will also, as in the Gulf War, draw on his military background to urge a sinewy response to the Serbian challenge.

What must be heard now are the voices of the men and women who represent the country. As before the Falklands or the Gulf War, the nation needs to be clear what is at stake and why British lives must be put at risk. Like Czechoslovakia in 1938, the Bosnian war is going on in a country of which we know little. Yet it has taken a considerable toll. It has done more damage to transatlantic relations than anything since Suez. It has bankrupted the United Nations and mesmerised Nato. More Britons have been lost in the fighting than were ever killed in 40 years of Cold War confrontation with the Warsaw Pact.

In containing communism, the Western democracies adopted a long-term strategy, underpinned by military strength and ideological cohesion. No such strategy exists for dealing with the raging nationalisms or the atavistic hatreds that have succeeded communism. Western myopia is as much to blame as the dearth of leadership. The titans of the postwar years are gone; they have been followed by mewling men whose sights never rise above the Brussels negotiating table. Bosnia has been a history of expediency, make-do and stand-off.

The Commons, too, has lost its statesmen. No Enoch Powell or David Owen will today speak with the authority that made the Falklands debate so memorable: the best orators are now all in the Lords. Sir Edward Heath still rises to such occasions, though his drift is nowadays quixotic. Other backbench Conservatives however have, until now, been tiptoeing blindly around the Balkans, uncertain what to propose, uncertain of the country's mood.

Today the country demands from them greater resolution. They must give unequivocal backing to the Prime Minister's leadership, or must argue a cogent case for withdrawal. Vacillation led to the present impasse on the ground; it is now time for the British body politic to demonstrate the leadership that befits a permanent Security Council seat.

ROTTEN BOROUGHES

Labour complacency about bad local councils is a mistake

By the next election, voters under 35 will have seen Labour in power only in local government. As support for the Conservatives has fallen away, Labour now dominates the country's town halls. But a recent crop of revelations about corruption, gerrymandering and over-zealous political correctness is now in danger of sulling Labour's national image. While the majority of Labour councils are run perfectly well, there is a stubborn minority displaying characteristics that should be anathema to "new" Labour.

In the London Borough of Hackney, for instance, a former housing director, Bernard Crofton, who drew attention to fraudulent job applications, was sacked for racial harassment, which he strongly denies. Mr Crofton was concerned that, when 18 rent recovery officer posts were to be filled, 15 of the successful candidates were West African. Given that only 6 per cent of Hackney's population are of African origin, such disproportion was suspicious. Several of the successful applicants had falsified references or employment records. Mr Crofton asked the personnel department to investigate his concerns. When he complained that the department was unwilling to tackle the problem, he was sacked.

Children in care in the London Borough of Islington could have done with a whistle-blower as committed as Mr Crofton. According to a report last week by the director of Oxfordshire social services, Ian White, the council's running of its childcare homes was "disastrous". Managers were so wary of offending black or gay employees that they failed to check references or to follow up complaints. The result was that paedophiles were free to abuse children in their care.

According to the report, the council was "paralysed by equal opportunity and race issues". Officers could not demand references from employers or ask about any disciplinary action in former jobs because it was assumed that minority applicants would have suffered discrimination. The rights of blacks and homosexuals, in other words, were put above the rights of children. How many young lives were thus blighted?

Margaret Hodge, one of Labour's modernisers, presided over Islington during this period of neglect. She originally dismissed the allegations as "sensationalist gutter journalism". Now she admits responsibility for what went wrong, but still pleads ignorance of the scandal at the time. Yet, as Mr White wrote: "What is sad is that Islington did not systematically investigate the allegations, and, as a result, the possibility remains that children have been abused and that the abusers are still working in the field elsewhere."

Labour nationally has been curiously silent about councils such as Hackney and Islington, although it is investigating irregularities in Birmingham and Paisley. Usually it devotes responsibility to local parties; yet these tend to be dominated by the very councillors whose policies are at fault.

Clearly Labour is not alone in its difficulties. Conservative-controlled Westminster has been accused of gerrymandering. But, as Tory councils become rarer than Siberian tigers, corruption and incompetence are bound to arise more often in Labour town halls. Tony Blair should have his party investigate all serious allegations and publish the results. Otherwise its new image will be contaminated by a few rotten boroughs.

WHEN WEST MEETS EAST

Catholicism and Orthodoxy may yet become friends

One of the most futile, yet perhaps inevitable, of the many divisions within Christianity has been the break between Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy — seen at its most tragic today in Bosnia. Political and cultural reasons, as much as theological ones, dictated that Western Christendom and its Eastern half should part ways. Pope John Paul II's encyclical letter, *Ut Unum Sint* ("that they may all be one") addresses this ancient quarrel.

By the 5th century, the Western half of the Roman Empire had collapsed as a political unit. But it was still spiritually led by the see of Rome, and its ecclesiastical language was Latin. In the East, the Empire lived on in Byzantium or "Constantinople" and was governed in the Greek tongue. The two halves began to compete for souls. The Polish Pope is, for instance, a product of the Roman Catholic Church's missionary zeal in Eastern Europe: Russian Orthodoxy is a product of 10th-century evangelism by Constantinople. To this day, especially in Bosnia and Ukraine, the fault-lines between the two jurisdictions have been regarded as a matter of great importance, sometimes, regrettably, of life and death.

To outsiders the theological difference between the two churches over the *Filioque* clause (Rome believes that in the Trinity the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son as well as the Father, while Orthodoxy holds from the

Father alone) seem like hair-splitting. But theology to the layman often appears arcane. Layman and cleric alike are right to deplore the lack of charity displayed by the two churches. From 1054, when Pope Leo IX and the Patriarch of Constantinople, Michael Cerularius, hurled anathemas across the altar of Hagia Sophia itself, the churches even refused to recognise each other.

More encouragingly, at the end of the Second Vatican Council the two churches dropped their mutual anathemas. They are still only in partial communion — relations between the Protestant churches and the East in recent times have been better — but the Polish Pope's almost millennial desire to end this dispute is to be commended.

The theologians will decide whether John Paul II's humble apologies for his Church's errors and his plea for "legitimate diversity" are enough to calm Eastern Orthodoxy's fears over his claims to primacy and authority. The intriguing possibility remains, however, that if the two churches surmount their divisions, the trickle of conservative Anglicans seeking communion with Rome, and Constantinople, will become a flood. If the Pope's encyclical were to be followed by full union, history might remember him less for his controversial forays into birth control and more as the man who achieved "the impossible": unity between East and West.

Waste and delay in defence projects

From Professor Sir Hermann Bondi, FRS

Sir, In your issue of May 24 the sad tale of massive cost and time overruns in Ministry of Defence projects is reiterated by the National Audit Office. We are told, for instance, that the nation's 25 largest defence equipment orders are running an average of more than three years late and that 23 of them (ie, without Trident and Eurofighter 2000) are a total of £645 million over their forecast budgets.

Both the cause and the cure for this problem are well known, but there remains the serious question whether the cure can be widely applied without creating insurmountable difficulties for career structures, both on the uniformed and on the civilian side of the ministry, since they require frequent changes of post.

Projects prosper if there is a powerful, centralised, unified project-management team in place, with a project manager who is responsible for the project "from cradle to grave". In particular, once this manager has become familiar with the proposed task, the first essential job is to specify the resources of money, staff, time and facilities required for completion and to offer milestones of achievement along the way.

The whole undertaking is likely to take many years, during which period none of the key staff should change. If the task is successfully accomplished in the time and with the resources they specified, a double promotion should be the reward; if they fail to deliver, retirement may well be appropriate. By contrast, insufficient authority for the management team, with frequent changes of its personnel, is a sure recipe for disaster.

On rare occasions, MoD has set up teams with the requisite powers (eg, the Polaris executive) and the successes achieved have astonished the old hands. What needs to be done is well known: but whether such medicine can be generally applied in view of other desiderata is a difficult question.

Yours faithfully,
HERMANN BONDI
(Chief Scientific Adviser,
Ministry of Defence, 1971-77,
Churchill College, Cambridge,
May 24.

Advice to Ashdown

From Mr David Hanson, MP for Delyn (Labour)

Sir, Paddy Ashdown's wish to end equidistance (report, May 27) is all well and good. However, I wonder if it will work out that way in practice? From where I sit I need only look to my neighbouring English county of Cheshire to see a minority Tory administration put in power by Liberal support. On my other side in Denbighshire in Wales, an anti-Labour coalition has just been formed and will be kept in power by Liberals. On both councils Labour is the largest party.

Perhaps Mr Ashdown will now call his local troops to order and end equidistance in practice as well as in rhetoric. If, however, he were living in the real world he would see that the answer is staring him in the face.

If people wish to see a progressive, radical, anti-Tory party take over the reins of both local and national government they should vote for the real thing, the Labour Party under the leadership of Tony Blair.

With best wishes, yours sincerely,
DAVID HANSON,
House of Commons,
May 27.

Rural power

From Mr Gordon Wixey

Sir, Mr Malmick (letter, May 15) takes issue with restrictions to the public's right of access to Epping Forest. But the Epping Forest Act of 1878, to which he refers, requires that the natural aspect of the forest is preserved in addition to the area's function as a public open space.

The magic of Epping Forest is that it is managed as a natural environment, not fashioned purely to provide unrestricted access. It is a relic of ancient woodland, an historic landscape and national heritage site.

Recreational activities need to be balanced with a statutory duty to manage and preserve. Four of the 16 members of this committee are elected locally, expressly to represent the view of people living in and around the forest.

Yours faithfully,
GORDON WIXEY
(Chairman, Epping Forest & Open Spaces Committee),
Corporation of London,
PO Box 270, Guildhall, EC2,
May 19.

Terms of address

From Mr Colin Baser

Sir, Recently I received a letter from a local firm of travel agents addressed as "Mr C Baser, Ignore this File". I have done so, but I am not sure whether to be pleased or offended by the instruction.

Yours sincerely,
COLIN BASER,
2 John Cabot Court,
Cumberland Close, Bristol, Avon,
May 29.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Doubts cast on the Lord Chancellor's 'league table'

From Mr Malcolm Swift, QC

Sir, A table of legal aid lawyers judged by their successes (report, May 24)? Has the Lord Chancellor forgotten that the *raison d'être* of the Bar is to provide an independent fearless body of advocates prepared to fight for any client who needs a barrister, whether or not the case is a sure-fire winner.

Are we now to pick and choose the cases in order to stay at the top of the "performance league" so as to attract more work in future? Where does that leave those who traditionally have looked to the Bar to help them — namely those whose cases are not obviously winnable, the underdogs and those fighting oppression or unfashionable causes?

And who is to judge performance? Who will decide whether the sentence imposed was better or worse than expected because of the lawyer's performance or because the judge was hard or soft? Is "client satisfaction" likely to be measured by any other criteria than whether he won or lost? Will the lawyer who gets through the case quickly because of lack of proper preparation be rewarded for speed?

The motive for all this is really quite obvious. Cutting the cost of running the courts is the shrine at which Lord Mackay worships. Disguising such policy under the cloak of quality control is a cruel deceit on those who will inevitably be denied proper representation. Undermining the independence of the Bar seems to be no more than the removal of an annoying obstacle to the implementation of this policy.

Yours faithfully,
MALCOLM SWIFT,
Park Court Chambers,
40 Park Cross Street,
Leeds, West Yorkshire,
May 24.

From His Honour D. L. McDonnell

Sir, The Lord Chancellor seems unable or unwilling to see that it is one of the pillars supporting the integrity of the legal profession that neither solicitor nor barrister has a pecuniary interest in the outcome of a case in which he or she is engaged. Remuneration is determined by the importance, length and difficulty of the case, and not by the "outcome".

Every case depends upon its particular facts: the best lawyers may be badly by "outcomes" because they have the most difficult cases (or have been instructed by the wrong side). Those who only take "winners" will go

to the top of the Lord Chancellor's proposed "league table". More seriously, the temptation to win at all costs may not always be resisted.

How is the league table to be compiled? The whole idea is nonsense.

Yours faithfully,
DENIS L. McDONNELL,
Stammore House, 3 Silverdale Road,
Burgess Hill, West Sussex,
May 25.

From Mr Arnold Rosen
Sir, The Lord Chancellor has floated the idea of league tables of legal aid solicitors and barristers. What if the same approach is adopted towards the judiciary?

In the last few days one High Court judge has had his sentence overturned in three days (report, May 23); and a Crown court judge has had a conviction overturned on the basis that he chose to act in a way that was more akin to a prosecutor than the Olympian detachment required of a judge (Law Report, May 25).

In such cases, if I were the solicitor acting for the victim of the injustice

could I decline to have such judges sit in judgment on my clients in future?

Alternatively, a 1 per cent deduction in the pension which I pay for such members of the judiciary on each occasion that the Court of Appeal allows an appeal against their determinations might be equally salutary.

Your readers are entitled to have me declare an interest. I have sued the Lord Chancellor's Department, the Department for Education and various public authorities quite successfully hitherto.

Yours faithfully,
ARNOLD ROSEN,
Arnold Rosen & Co (solicitors),
199 Piccadilly, W1,
May 25.

From Mrs L. A. Fleischmann

Sir, I am due to represent a client who insists on pleading "not guilty" at trial. The evidence is overwhelming but the client will not admit guilt. I will "lose" the case and it will not be for lack of expertise or my providing a poor service.

Do I return the case, so as not to affect my "success rate", and leave the client to try and find another barrister?

Yours faithfully,
LAUREN FLEISCHMANN,
2 Pump Court, Temple, EC4,
May 24.

From Mr J. Bunting

Sir, The Lord Chancellor's proposal for league tables for legal aid solicitors involved in criminal work is intriguing.

May I suggest an award of one point for securing the acquittal of an innocent client, or for a timely guilty plea by a guilty one; no points for not preventing the conviction of an innocent client; and three for securing the acquittal of a guilty one.

Yours truly,
J. BUNTING,
77 Green Lane, Buxton, Derbyshire.

From Mr Louis Harding

Sir, Spurred on by Lord Mackay, I have been pondering other possible candidates for a league table. The first which springs to mind was one listing governments.

Yours faithfully,
L. HARDING,
Stamwell House,
Rickingham, Diss, Norfolk.

Students' rent rise

From Mr Stuart C. Brown, QC

Sir, The comments reportedly made by the Master of Pembroke College, Oxford (News in Brief, later editions, May 26), describing the college's rent-striking students as "bourgeois, if not Brideshead" and "having a welfare dependency", do him little credit, them an injustice, and are hardly designed to resolve the present impasse. Still further, they do not address the point at issue.

As a parent of a first-year student, writing unbidden and well aware that it will be thought I could and, in the Master's view, should contribute more, I know that the principal and consistently expressed concern of this quite astonishing size (70 per cent over three years) hit all, those who can afford (perhaps by further recourse to parents) and those who simply cannot.

Is it really the Master's view that he is prepared to attract to his college only the former, or does he not want a student body from a mix of backgrounds comprising the "brightest and the best"?

The students have taken a responsible stance, paying their withheld contributions into a specially created fund held by the JCR (junior common room) and have sought to engage in constructive dialogue.

They have been met with solicitors'

letters and threats to sue and to withhold degrees.

Of course Pembroke's financial difficulties must be addressed, but this cannot be done by the unilateral imposition of financial obligations upon students who applied to and entered the college on one basis and now find that not only are their commitments unrecognisable from those initially understood, but also that the whole ethos and social mix of the college may be changed for ever.

Yours faithfully,
STUART C. BROWN,
Pearl Chambers, 22 East Parade,
Leeds, West Yorkshire,
May 28.

From Professor Emeritus H. MacL. Currie

Sir, The current economic difficulties for students at Pembroke College, Oxford ("College" tells rent-striking to sell Bacon portrait", May 27), remind me that young Sam Johnson, of Lichfield, entered that institution in October 1728, and that increasingly severe poverty forced him to leave it without taking his degree. However, the present generation of undergraduates there fortunately possess, it seems, the means of saving their bacon.

Yours truly,
H. MACL. CURRIE,
25 West Street, Yarm, Cleveland,
May 27.

M4 coach crash

From Mr David Gladstone

Sir, Ten years ago, almost to the day, a British coach carrying schoolchildren on holiday crashed near Leddigan in the south of France. Seven children died and others were so badly injured that only the skills of the French rescue and medical services saved their lives.

In that accident, as in the latest one (reports, May 24-26), the coach overturned and its roof collapsed, trapping all those who had not already been thrown clear and crushing most of them. As the local British Consul-General at the time I was closely involved in the aftermath.

In my report on the accident I noted that many experts had been calling for mandatory crush-proof roll-overs to be fitted to coaches and added my voice to theirs. I understand that regulations to this effect now ensure their application to new vehicles, but the one on the M4 was not new.

Ten years later I had hoped, naively, that something more might have been done to spare others the pain and suffering I witnessed.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID GLADSTONE,
1 Mountfort Terrace, NI,
May 26.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.

Population issues

From Dr S. Mohindra

Sir, Prosperity does not lead to a decline in the rate of population growth (letters, May 9, 23). Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries have been rich now for two generations and the rate of population growth there is twice that of Bangladesh and poorer countries.

As recently as 1971 Bangladesh, the size of England, had the same number of people as Britain. It now has twice as many, and should have four times that number in 30 years' time. Food imports are costing the country money that could be used for development if it stabilised its population.

If the Western world were to reserve a minute portion of its defence budget expenditure for an incentive scheme to give all women in the Third World say £15 a month until the birth of their third child, thereby doubling or tripling family incomes and eliminating poverty overnight, most of them would accept a lifelong bounty and stop at two.

It is a small price to pay to save the planet, since many of these countries will soon have nuclear weapons and will probably use them, as economic and social conditions decline and wars break out.

Yours sincerely,
S. MOHINDRA,
Compton Acres Medical Centre,
West Bridgford, Nottingham,
May 23.

Mirror up to nature

From Mr Ian Curteis

Sir, Three cheers for the up-to-the-minute casting ethics of Mr Oliver Parker, who for his first film is to direct a re-make of *Othello* (report and photograph, May 29).

Of the lead role, you report his comment: "It is a mistake to use a white actor to play that part nowadays."

I fully support this enlightened approach. From now on, only orthodox Jews should play Shylock, only actors born north of Hadrian's Wall Macbeth, and only genuine hunchbacks Richard III. The fact that Laurence Olivier was none of these things yet scored three of his greatest triumphs in those roles shows clearly that he actually had little idea of what acting was for.

Yours truly,
IAN CURTEIS,
The Mill House, Coln St Aldwyns,
Cirencester, Gloucestershire,
May 29.

Comings and goings

From Mr John Hollow

Sir, Some years ago I had occasion to cut down a tree (Mr D. B. Gurrey's letter, May 24). I told my, then, small daughter that my next task was to cut it up. No amount of persuasion could convince her that this was not the reverse of cutting down, and that the tree would not, as she expected, be restored to the vertical.

When the best I could do was to cut it into pieces, my credibility suffered a setback from which it took years to recover.

Yours faithfully,
J. G. HOLLOW,
Pounslieycombe,
Spriddestone, Brixton, Devon,
May 24.

From Mr D. G. H. Brookfield

Sir, Slowing, whether up or down, is an inadequate response to the passage of time. May I suggest Mr Gurrey starts winding down his activities at once: before the fates get the idea of winding them up.

Yours concernedly,
D. G. H. BROOKFIELD,
Hesworth Grange, Fittleworth,
Pulborough, West Sussex,
May 24.

From Mr Tarquin Cooper

Sir, I am deeply confused with all these comings and goings (letters, May 11, 13, 15, 19, 20, 24).

Can I suggest, as my preparatory school headmaster used to say, that we should "pipe down and bell up", and be done with this nonsense.

Yours faithfully,
TARQUIN COOPER,
Castle Leazes Hall,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 4NY,
May 25.

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carpet, low outgoings.
£125,000
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Very sunny 1 bedroom top
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with large garden and
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On 3 floors, 2 double beds,
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Large and beautiful apartment
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large garden, 20 ft terrace,
private off street parking.
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floor flat in a period terrace
with large garden and
wonderful views over garden.
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garden and wonderful views
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RENOVATED FIVE BEDDING

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Large living area, over
garage, 3rd floor, balcony
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security.
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small 11', guest bath,
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over garden. £139,000
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MONTAGU MANSIONS, W1

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in a period terrace with large
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over garden. £139,000
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SOUTHWICK PLACE, W2

2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor flat
in a period terrace with large
garden and wonderful views
over garden. £139,000
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in a period terrace with large
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HAMPSTEAD & HIGHGATE

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in a period terrace with large
garden and wonderful views
over garden. £139,000
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HIGHGATE

2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor flat
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Tel: 0171 373 6269

CONVERTED CHURCH

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in a period terrace with large
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GREENWICH & BLACKHEATH

2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor flat
in a period terrace with large
garden and wonderful views
over garden. £139,000
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BLACKHEATH

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in a period terrace with large
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A HOUSE WITH ARTISTS STUDIOS
Selling or Rent
De Bevoise conversion area N1.
3 Bed room with 2 purpose built
artists studios. The larger one
based on a Queen Anne chimney
with a self contained high level
water gas. Front plot with paved
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kitchen, GCH. Fitted pool, hot
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Edwardian house. Many original
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area. Garden. No chain.
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2,500 sq ft of spacious
grandeur. Magnificently
finished with high ceilings,
fireplaces, entrance hall,
dining room, 2nd floor, 3rd
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The law requiring Classic FM to outbid its rivals just to keep going cries out for reform. But where should reform stop?

When I suggested to John Spearman that he was franchising his Classic FM like McDonald's, he was flattered. The founder of the two-year-old station knows his recipe backwards. Take a huge record library, slice it into bite-sized portions, make sure that familiar ingredients dominate the exotic (ten *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* to one Poulenc), garnish with a bright theme tune and commercials, and serve with friendly voices suggesting that they too were once scared of classical music.

Classic FM is not just exporting a format, but its whole service. So tight will be the quality control when it sets up in American cities that the parts of the programme that sound local, such as news and weather, will in fact be shipped as raw information to New York for processing and then fed down the line back to the boondocks. North-

Will they play fair with Classic?



BRENDA MADDOX

ing will interrupt the smooth, confident, accessible sound that Classic has made its trademark.

But Mr Spearman has a nightmare, with which he has gone public. If it comes true, by the turn of the century Classic FM stations could be flourishing across Europe and America but gone from these fair isles. For, by one of the many caprices of the 1990 Broadcasting Act, the holders of the three national commercial radio franchises must bid again when their licence comes up for renewal. And by the same law the highest bidder wins. This winner does not even have to promise a classical music service. The law simply specifies "non-pop" music for this FM franchise (FM is singularly good

for music transmission). Thus national commercial radio is made to operate in a far harsher world than commercial television does.

The Independent Television Commission, the counterpart to the Radio Authority, also awarded its television franchises to the highest bidder. But the law required it to ensure that bidders first passed a "quality threshold". In the future it will simply renegotiate the franchises with the winners when their current licence runs out.

In contrast, the three national commercial stations, Classic, Virgin 125 and Talk Radio, will have to submit new, blind bids to the Radio Authority, which is not allowed to make judgments on

programme quality, only on the soundness of business plans. Therefore Classic FM has no guarantee whatsoever that it can retain what it has built up.

Mr Spearman, an Anglo-Irish entrepreneur who made his name

in advertising, wants the law changed before Classic FM's licence goes on the block in late 1998. The new chairman of the Radio Authority, Sir Peter Gibbins, also favours reform of what is seen as an unintended consequence of legislation.

So prospects for change look good. The public interest, about which Stephen Dorrell, the Heritage Secretary, made much last week, would seem to require it. So would natural justice. Capital FM has invested £18 million to make itself the haven for more than 4.5 million listeners a week who love it, finding Radio 2 too light and Radio 3 too heavy.

Classic FM's case seems entirely reasonable. It is hard, however, to

see why it should be met without Channel 4 also being allowed to keep for programmes the millions of pounds it has to hand back to ITV—this year about two-thirds of its £34 million profit. Both anomalies, after all, are unintended consequences of the infamous 1990 Act.

ROY HATTERSLEY, MP, nearly fell off his seat—and, in the audience, so did I—when on Saturday at the Hay-on-Wye Literary Festival, John Cole engagingly let drop that when he became the BBC's political editor in 1981, he was obliged to sign the Official Secrets Act. "Don't you find that extraordinary?" Hattersley asked the audience. Few did. They

seemed to accept it as quite normal that the BBC's journalism would not be as unfettered as the rest. (The BBC said yesterday that the requirement, made of people "in sensitive positions", ceased in 1985.)

When, after a career in newspapers, Cole entered broadcasting, he was "appalled by the brevity" required. He learnt, however, that there are other skills with which to communicate complexity.

Someone else who became an unlikely master of the soundbite is Judge Stephen Tummim, Chief Inspector of Prisons. Learned, courteous, with his wise eyes peering over half-moon spectacles, he manipulated his opportunities on television and radio better than a politician or pop star. He got his message across: intolerable conditions are being tolerated; something must be done. With his retirement (announced last week) media discourse becomes poorer.

Edgy advertisers are asking if there is sufficient programme investment, Alexandra Frean writes

Can ITV halt its slide down the ratings?

The controllers of Britain's television channels have taken wing to California, the industry's annual round of US programme-buying. For Marcus Plantin, Director of the ITV Network, the screenings will present a special challenge: will he be able to find any goodies capable of winning back ITV's flagging audience share?

After two years in which it knocked the spots off BBC1 with a seemingly endless string of drama mega-hits (*Peak Practice*, *Cracker*, *Band of Gold*, *Prime Suspect*, *The Knack*, *Touch of Frost*), ITV has suddenly and unexpectedly hit a brick wall and its ratings are on the slide. In the first 21 weeks of the year its overall audience share slipped by 2.4 points to 37.3 per cent, while BBC1's rose fractionally to 32.5 per cent, narrowing the gap between the two to just under 5 per cent. Even in peak time, ITV has shed 2.1 per cent of its share to 41.7 per cent, while BBC1 has edged up to 33.7 per cent. At the same time, BBC2, Channel 4 and cable and satellite television have also stolen audiences from ITV in both peak and daytime hours.

Although ITV still has the largest television audiences in Britain, its loss of share is making the station's paymasters, the advertisers, edgy.

The Institute of Practitioners in Advertising is so concerned, in fact, that Nick Phillips, its Director-General, recently wrote the following to ITV: "We are not convinced that sufficient investment is being given to programming." Plantin admits the fall in share hurts. "As a competitive person, I have to admit that there is a bit of pain here," he says, adding: "There were a few weeks in April when the

weather changed and we could not get things together." ITV's spring schedules suffered, Plantin believes, because a new series of its Customs and Excise drama *The Knack*, which he was expecting to screen last month, has been delayed.

What Plantin cannot deny, however, is that BBC1—finally—is beginning to have some popular drama successes and has a more solid-looking schedule than it has had in years. BBC1's *The Ver*, starring Jennifer Holt, attracted 11.1 million viewers to its first episode on March 21. It followed the success of the action adventure series *Bugs*, starring Craig McLachlan (formerly of *Neighbours*), which pulled in between 8.5

'As a competitive person, I have to admit that there is a bit of pain here'

and 11 million viewers and the whimsical police drama *Hamish Macbeth*, which attracted 8.5 to 11 million. Although such figures would not be classed as huge hits on ITV, the new programmes have managed to eat lumps out of ITV's weekend audience share.

Plantin is confident that ITV can hit back in the drama department. To judge from the success of ITV's new historic medical series *Bramwell* (which got a 44 per cent audience share for its first episode) and the recent viewing figures for *Band of Gold*, *She's Out* and *Kavanagh QC*, all of which got 13 million-plus viewers, ITV's days as a popular drama powerhouse are far from over. New projects include a series of *Thief Takers* and a pilot for a drama called *Bliss*, a science-fiction pro-

gramme starring Simon Shepherd from *Peak Practice*.

However, advertisers are worried that ITV will continue to have problems in factural programming and situation comedy. Typically, these programmes attract the kind of unmarked, male audiences, or "light viewers" in ad-speak, that the advertisers crave.

ITV has nothing in its armoury, for example, to rival BBC1's factual series *Animal Hospital*, which pulled in nearly 12 million viewers on a Thursday night earlier this year. And in comedy it has failed to match BBC1 successes such as *Goodnight Sweetheart*, starring Nicholas Lyndhurst, which pulled in about 12 million viewers.

"I will probably have to have an epitaph," he wanted ITV to have a mega-comedy with 12 million viewers. Actually, he adds, what he really wants is two really strong sitcoms. The BBC's strength is due in part, Plantin believes, to its

collegiate structure and chummy atmosphere, which creates an ambience in which comedy thrives. The BBC also has the great fertile plains of radio, in which comedy can be nurtured. "From Alan Bennett to Guy Perkins, the great comedy talent has started in radio," he says. Plantin hopes to remedy this by breaking with tradition and launching new sitcoms in this year's autumn schedule. In addition to beating off stronger than expected competition from BBC1, Plantin recognises that he now has to plan for the Channel 5 challenge. At the LA screenings the main broadcasters, the BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Sky, will now be joined by the potential Channel 5 licence holders. "There is going to be more competition than ever this year," Plantin says.



The Ver's 11.1 million (an impressive BBC1 audience) chases *Peak Practice*'s 14 million



Bugs captured up to 11 million viewers, catching up on *The Knack* with 12.5 million



Hamish Macbeth attracted a respectable 11 million; *Kavanagh QC* got 14 million



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Consumer comebacks

Yesterday's brands are tomorrow's profits, writes Alex Benady

In recent months some of the best-known brands of the 1960s and 70s have made a comeback. Hal Karate aftershave, Spangles, Action Man, Cadbury's Grand Seville, Old Jamaica and Freddo are just a few of the old favourites to have been re-launched in a deluge of commercial nostalgia.

"The cost of launching new brands is escalating, they can cost millions or even tens of millions of pounds to establish—and nine out of ten fail. It makes perfect commercial sense to relaunch something tried and tested," says Chris Wood, managing director of brand consultants CLK.

According to Peter Wallis, the co-founder of the management consultancy firm SRU, growing awareness of the value of dormant brands has given birth to a new generation of entrepreneurs. "During the Seventies and Eighties people bought companies for their pension funds, buildings or land. Now they are realising that old brands are a huge store of value which with skilful management can be unlocked."

One such company is International Classic Brands, which is making waves in the £2 billion-a-year cosmetics market by buying up prestigious but tired brand names and marketing them at a substantially lower price than its rivals.

The company's portfolio includes Worth and Carven perfumes, Mornay soaps, Cyclac cream and Malibu suntan lotion. "These names have resonance with consumers the world over. They haven't been shelved or under-supported because there is no demand, but for

strategic reasons or because the larger companies can't make them pay," says David Reiner, the ICB founder.

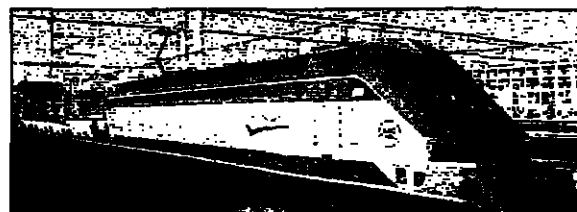
The key to unlocking the potential value of old brands, he says, lies in taking lower margins and re-adapting the products to the demands of today's marketplace. Action Man, for example, was modernised from militarist cold warrior to something more akin to an environmental campaigner. ICB sells what were once luxury products in the mid-market, generating higher sales. This allows both ICB and the retailer to reduce their mark-up, leading to lower prices, and higher sales.

According to Reiner, the highest quality "designer" perfume might cost £150 for ingredients plus another £150 in packaging. Company overheads—offices, distribution and advertising—boost the price to £4. The manufacturer then sells it for £15 to a small chemist, who, fearing he may sell only one bottle a week, prices it at £30. But ICB can make and package the same perfume for £3, and it can be retailled for, perhaps, £12.

Selling a luxury product cheap in a supermarket, however, can soon eat up all the "consumer equity" in it that is the esteem that consumers hold for the brand, which is what made it worth reviving in the first place. Reiner's solution to this is to reinvest in his brands with substantial advertising campaigns.

It could also work, Reiner says, in the clothing and sportswear markets and in food and drink, as the appeal of the "value brand" spreads.

Discounts and free petrol with Le Shuttle



France is suddenly much closer with the opening of Le Shuttle drive-on service to take your car through the Channel Tunnel. In conjunction with Eurotunnel *The Times* has devised a great offer of special prices on night return Shuttle fares for short-stay trips to France. Or you can save on a long-stay ticket. And, in association with Elf Oil UK Ltd, the offer enables you to obtain up to £100-worth of petrol or diesel fuel free for your trip.

WHAT IT COSTS

We have arranged, through EuroDrive, the travel specialists, a Nightrider five-day return fare of £99 (normally £115) which includes your car and all passengers, and two £25 vouchers which can be exchanged for fuel when you fill up at any of 51 Elf stations throughout the UK.

An even bigger reduction is available on long-stay fares. The price is £149 instead of £214, again for a car and all passengers, and four £25 vouchers to buy fuel. The vouchers can be used separately or together; no change will be given.

To help further, EuroDrive has negotiated preferential insurance rates. Cover for children under 14 years is half-price and children under three are insured free.

Our offer, on travel, fuel and insurance, applies to journeys completed by noon on July 13 1995. To qualify, you have to travel outward between 9pm and 5am, and arrive back before 12 noon on the day of return. There is no car length restriction but maximum height is strictly 1.85 metres.

HOW TO BOOK

Collect any four of the six tokens which will appear until Friday and make your application on the booking form printed last Saturday, when full offer details were published. Send to: *The Times* Nightrider Offer, EuroDrive, The Broadway, 3-5 Crouch End Hill, London N8 8DH.



Readers' digest or new word order?



Opposites: short reads in *The Week*, more in *Prospect*

Is there too much to read in our newspapers or too little? Jon Connell believes the former, David Goodhart the latter. Both are so convinced of their ground that they are launching publications dedicated to proving their opposing views.

Connell, the former Deputy Editor of *The Sunday Telegraph*, starts out this week with *The Week*: an idea, he says, which couldn't be simpler. It is to counteract the bombardment of information by publishing a comprehensive digest of the coverage, comment, and analysis from the week's vast daily newspaper output.

He promises that his selec-

The founders of two new magazines explain their different editorial philosophies to Roy Greenslade

tion will be "a witty, incisive, and practical review of everything that matters". In 32 A4-sized pages, he aims to provide a cross-section of all the most important tidbits from editorials, art reviews, sports reports, business commentaries, and so on. "After years and years of reading too many newspapers, I was still prone to overlooking something good," Connell says. "Now it's really difficult with newspapers having expanded by 30 per cent in

the last 18 months. Many people just don't have the time to read everything, but want to know what other papers or their columnists are saying. Now they'll be able to see it in a nutshell in *The Week*."

So who will subscribe £65 a year for *The Week*? Connell argues that "busy people are the core market". These are supposedly people who read one paper, have no time to read another, but would love to hear about current events from a different perspective. This might seem a small audience, but a confident Connell says subscriptions are coming in every day.

Just as confident is David Goodhart, who has taken leave of absence—not, he says, of his senses—as employment editor of the *Financial Times* to launch and edit *Prospect*, a monthly magazine priced at about £3.95. He wants to "re-establish the essay-writing tradition in British journalism, with a blend of high-class polemic, dispassionate overview and report-

age". Articles will be up to 5,000 words, though there will be shorter columns as well.

Goodhart had gathered an impressive list of writers—including Robert Skidelsky, George Steiner, Frederic Raphael and John Casey—and an impressive editorial board of about 30. He wants to attract a readership among opinion-formers and will be helped more than a little by his first issue, due in September, being distributed by the *Financial Times*.

But is there a need, or a market, for a magazine with a stated aim of being "politically pluralistic" and "occupying the intellectual high ground"? Goodhart says: "Other magazines, such as *The Economist* and the *Spectator*, much as I enjoy them, are tied to the week's political events in Britain. One isn't intellectually nourished by them. I feel the lack of a magazine which offers lengthy essays by the most authoritative, best writer on any given subject."

Cynical journalists who have seen such projects come and go may not rate the chances of either *Prospect* or *The Week*. But the enthusiasm from Connell and Goodhart is infectious. The question is: can they both be right?

Soaps still clean up

SOAP fans remained loyal in the week of May 8, despite schedule changes. *EastEnders* (BBC1) was moved twice to make way for special or new shows; *Coronation Street* was two hours late on the Wednesday thanks to football; *Brookside* (C4) ran every day.

THE TIMES TV TOP 10 SOAPS					
May 8 to 14, 1995					
Programme	Date	Time	Channel	Producer	Audience (Mls) All 4+
1 Coronation Street	Fri 12	19.29	ITV	Granada Television	15.9
2 EastEnders	Thu 11	19.51	BBC1	BBC	13.9
3 The Bill	Fri 12	20.01	ITV	Thames Television	12.1
4 Emmerdale	Thu 11	19.01	ITV	Yorkshire Television	10.1
5 Neighbours	Thu 11	19.37	BBC1	Granada Television	9.3
6 Home And Away	Thu 11	18.01	ITV	Serenity Productions	7.7
7 Brookside	Fri 12	20.30	CH4	Brookside Productions	6.1
8 High Road*	Fri 12	18.58	ITV	ITV	2.9
9 A Country Practice*	Thu 8	18.55	ITV	JWP Production	2.8
10 EastEnders-The Early Days	Tue 9	10.08	BBC1	BBC	0.8

BARB (Broadcasters' Audience Research Board)/David Graham & Associates 01823 322829

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NEWS

Major fears all-out Balkans war

John Major will today respond to growing concern about Britain's involvement in Bosnia-Herzegovina with a warning that there could be a full-scale Balkan war if the UN pulled out. MPs and peers are being recalled to Westminster to discuss the crisis today, and the Prime Minister is expected to use his speech to reject claims that Britain has no strategic interest in the conflict. Pages 1, 10, 11

Sailors killed as ship runs aground

One crew member was killed and two were missing, feared dead, after the world's oldest operational sailing ship ran aground on rocks off the north Cornwall coast. The 125ft brig *Maria Asumpta*, a wooden square-rigged sail training ship, was awaiting a pilot to escort her 14-strong crew into Padstow harbour. Page 1

Royal security fears

Fears for the security of the Prince of Wales on his historic visit to the Irish Republic, beginning today, were aroused when an incendiary device exploded in a bookshop in central Dublin. Nobody was injured. Page 1

Hoover sold

Hoover, the household appliance company, has been sold for a knockdown price by its American owner after its ill-fated "free flights" promotion, which cost it £48 million. Page 1

Banks closed

At least 230 branches of Barclays Bank were closed by strike action by clerical staff. Page 2

Lyell demands

Sir Nicholas Lyell, the Attorney-General, is facing demands from MPs for a "full explanation" after allegations that he misled the Commons over the trial of Roger Levitt, the fraudulent financial adviser. Page 2

Consultant's victory

A consultant haematologist dismissed for allegedly being rude claimed victory after the hospital where she worked admitted sacking her unfairly. Page 3

Bridge survivor

A man jumped 245ft from Clifton bridge and survived. Chris Copus, 36, escaped with fractured bones after his fall was broken by water. Page 3

Judging a novelist by her writing style

A letter by Charles Dickens which shows how perceptive he was about another novelist's work goes on sale next month. He wrote in January 1858 about a new book by George Eliot: "If those two volumes, or a part of them, were not written by a woman — then I should begin to believe that I am a woman myself!" Page 3

Pope's unity call

The Pope called for unity between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches before the end of the millennium. Page 5

Class of their own

More than ten thousand pupils will be excluded from school this year as teachers fight a losing battle with children whose parents have abdicated responsibility for them. Page 6

Domestic mediation

Warring neighbours in Scotland will from tomorrow be able to call on a mediator to sort out their differences without incurring large legal bills. Page 7

Committed to Europe

Tony Blair set out his European credentials to an audience in Bonn that loudly applauded his commitment to signing up to the social chapter. Page 8

Buried alive

Russian rescue workers fought to free dozens of people buried alive beneath the rubble caused by the earthquake on Sakhalin island, but officials said they feared the death toll would still exceed 2,000. Page 9

Japanese war row

The movement against an apology to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War is threatening to bring down the Government of Tomiichi Murayama. Page 9



Rory Underwood, left, and his brother, Tony, enjoying the surf in Durban yesterday. Rugby World Cup reports, pages 38, 39 and 44

FINES: The Securities and Futures Authority, the financial watchdog, levied its largest fine of £240,000 against Morgan Stanley, the US investment bank. Page 23

Bearings: The Bank of England report into the spectacular collapse of Bearings, London's oldest merchant bank, is to be delayed for almost two months, disappointing many in the City. Page 23

Pay: Fresh evidence of a rising trend in pay deals will be provided today by the Engineering Employers' Federation. Page 23

Markets: The FT-SE 100 index fell 1.2 points to 3309.9. Sterling's trade-weighted index was unchanged at 84.0 after a fall from \$1.6065 to \$1.6015 but a rise from DM2.2207 to DM2.2258. Page 26

Cricket: Worcestershire dismissed Yorkshire for 88 and won their Benson and Hedges Cup quarter-final by seven wickets. Lancashire beat Nottinghamshire to reach the semi-finals. Page 42

Rugby union: South Africa, France and Western Samoa qualified for the quarter-finals of the World Cup by winning their second pool matches. Pages 38, 39, 44

Tennis: Three seeds were eliminated in the first round of the French Open championships: Goran Ivanisevic, Natalia Zvereva and Mary Joe Fernandez. Page 44

Football: Manchester City sold Niall Quinn, their Republic of Ireland international striker, to Sporting Lisbon for about £2 million. Page 40

In the pink First came the new album, *The Division Bell*, then the world tour. Now rock fans are getting ready for Pink Floyd's new live album, *PULSE*, released this week. Page 33

Lung power: East 17, the boys from Walthamstow, make for an exhausting, but tolerable, live experience, as their Wembley Arena gig proved. Page 33

Puccini with punch: The success of Covent Garden's revival of *La Bohème* owes much to the French tenor Roberto Alagna, who turned in a bravura performance as Rodolfo. Page 34

Literary giant: What drives Sir Peter Hall? A new biography lifts the lid on Britain's extraordinary man of the theatre. Page 35

Company business: As British Gas shareholders gather for a stormy meeting, Giles Coren meets Anne Simpson, the scourge of big-spending directors. Page 12

Fighting for power: Lamar Alexander is unknown, but Ted Welch aims to make him US President. Martin Fletcher meets a formidable salesman. Page 12

Fashion: Follow the fashion pack into the Fifties by keeping your wedding dress simple, Iain R. Webb writes. Page 13

Channel wars: Alexandra Frean asks whether ITV can halt its slide down the ratings and keep edgy advertisers at bay. Page 21

The right response to the Bosnian crisis is to make sure UN forces have the necessary military means to defend themselves. The New York Times

The US Administration has insisted on calling Bosnia a European crisis. Can anyone doubt that the world needs American leadership? The Washington Times

IN THE TIMES

TALENT SCOUT

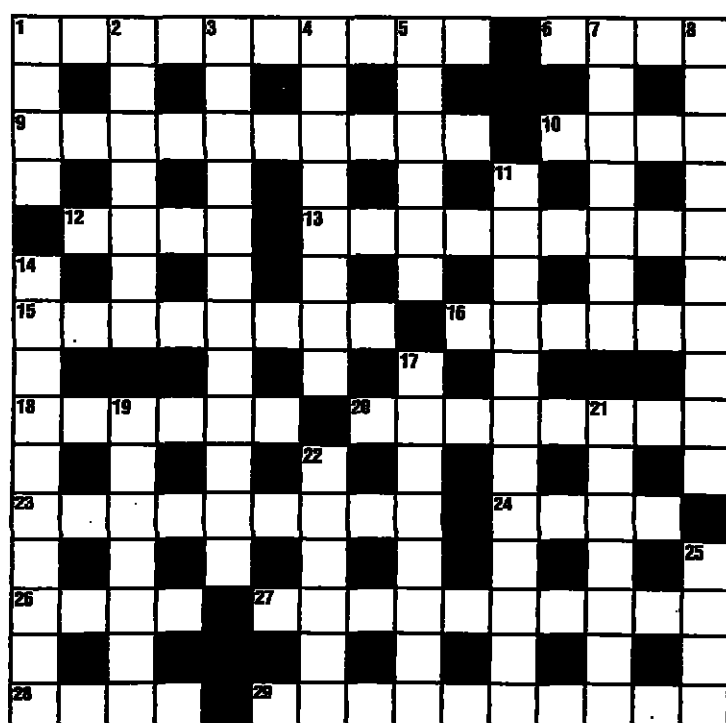
Geoff Brown in search of Elizabeth Hurley's acting talents in *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*

BOOK REVIEW

Peter Ackroyd on the trail of the riches of El Dorado with Sir Walter Raleigh



THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 19,869



ACROSS

- 1 Worn by old lags making a general bolt for it (5,5).
- 6 Grouse meat (4).
- 9 A fair account (10).
- 10 Helpful sort of tenant's place (4).
- 12 Tail-end hold up (4).
- 13 Wild beast seen — these children aren't going to school (9).
- 15 It takes a woman with courage to water down resolution (8).
- 16 A casual shirt worn by boy friend in boat (6).
- 18 It's fashionable and healthy to drag on a bag (6).
- 20 Beat a retreat before the king's hit man appears (8).
- 23 In charge, in a munitions factory, of the poison (9).
- 24 Strikes back in petty quarrel (4).
- 26 Call for a small vessel (4).

DOWN

- 27 War artist's racket (10).
- 28 Tau cross carried by Tutankhamen (4).
- 29 Sappers, battling, declared and got put back in (10).
- 1 Injured in Yugoslavia (4).
- 2 Sit on iron work the wrong way round (7).
- 3 Where to go for the records of your choice? (6,6).
- 4 They needed to put one in the net to win (8).
- 5 Bare-headed tramp is at wit's end in the wind (6).
- 7 English church in want of both sexes (7).
- 8 A firm boundary perhaps past point (4-6).
- 11 A brilliant Peruvian generation (12).
- 14 A religious qualification is a double degree in Africa (5,5).
- 17 Blunt lie slipped into official report (8).
- 19 Kneeler with hose (7).
- 21 Information from a computer about a reported suspect (4-3).
- 22 Bark, making a harsh sound (6).
- 25 He supplies cues and is paid (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 19,868

HOKEYCOKEY C B
R S O E OCTAVO
MARTINE B TWO
N I C CAKEWALK
G M U H P K
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O U N E R O O M A T E
R O C K G A R D E N

This puzzle was solved within 30 minutes by 10 per cent of the competitors at the 1995 Glasgow regional final of The Times Crossword Championship.

Times Two Crossword, page 44

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0800 500 followed by the appropriate code.

Region	Forecast
Greater London	701
Kent, Surrey, Sussex	702
Devon & Cornwall	703
Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Somerset	704
Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire	705
Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire	706
Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire	707
West Midlands & Shropshire & Cheshire	708
Shropshire, Herefordshire & Worcestershire	709
Central Midlands	710
East Midlands	711
Lincolnshire & Humberside	712
Derbyshire & Yorkshire	713
North Yorkshire & Cumbria	714
North West England	715
West Yorkshire & Lancashire	716
North East England	717
Cumbria & Lake District	718
South West England	719
Wales	720
Wales & Central Scotland	721
Edinburgh & Borders	722
East of Scotland	723
North East Scotland	724
North West Scotland	725
Central Scotland, Orkney & Shetland	726
North Ireland	727

Weathercall is charged at 39p per minute (cheap rate) and 49p per minute at all other times.

For the latest AA traffic/roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0300 401 followed by the appropriate code.

Area	Code
London & SE traffic, roadworks	731
Area within M25	732
East of M25 (Bucks, Bucks, Bucks, Bucks)	733
West of M25 (Dorset, Dorset, Dorset, Dorset)	734
M25 London Orbital only	735
National traffic and roadworks	736
Regional traffic and roadworks	737
West Country	738
Wales	739
Midlands	740
East Angles	741
North West England	742
North East England	743
Scotland	744
North Ireland	745

AA Roadwatch is charged at 39p per minute (cheap rate) and 49p per minute at all other times.

Monday: Highest day temp: Haslemere/Cobham

18°C; lowest day temp: Fair Isle, Shetland, 11°C; highest night temp: Collieston, Salford, 0.5°C; highest sunshine: Cromer, Norfolk, 14.3h.

General: England and Wales will have a fairly cloudy day, although a few bright or sunny intervals are expected. There will be showers around again and these could be heavy in eastern England during the afternoon. Northern and western Scotland will remain cloudy with showers, which will be more scattered over Northern Ireland and eastern Scotland.

London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E Midlands, E England, W Midlands, Central N: bright with sunny intervals and showers, possibly heavy. Wind northwest, light. Max 17°C (63°F).

Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales: bright with sunny intervals and showers, dying out. Wind northwest, light. Max 16°C (61°F).

N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Argyll, N Ireland: fairly

cloudy with scattered showers. Wind northwest, light. Max 15°C (59°F).

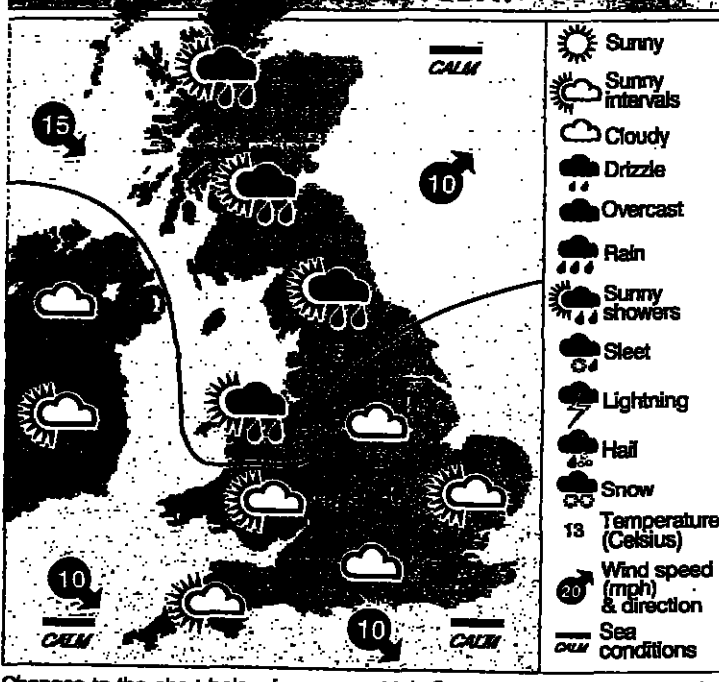
NE England, Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Central Highlands, Moray Firth: bright with some sunny intervals and scattered showers. Wind west to north-west, light. Max 16°C (61°F).

NE Scotland, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: Cloudy with showers. Wind generally light and variable. Max 14°C (57°F).

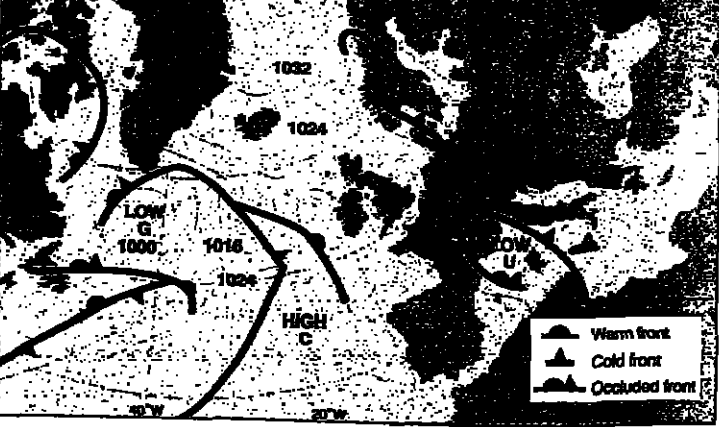
Outlook: during tomorrow morning patchy rain will reach the extreme southwest of England and will spread slowly across the country during tomorrow and Friday.

Pollen count: Scotland L: Northern England L: Northern Ireland L: Midlands L: East Anglia L: Wales L: South East L: South West L: London L: H=high, L=low M=moderate.

THE TIMES TODAY



Changes to the chart below from noon: high C will remain stationary with its central pressure unchanged; low G will run slowly towards Iceland and fill; low U will remain stationary over northern Italy and fill slowly



These are Monday's figures

TODAY

Location	AM	HT	PM	HT	Location	AM	HT	PM	HT
London Bridge	2:45	6:50	2:55	6:54	Leeds	3:27	5:25	3:51	5:14
Aberdeen	2:17	3:35	2:41	3:59	Wespool	3:27	5:25	3:51	5:14
Aberdeen	2:17	3:35	2:41	3:59	Wespool	3:27	5:25	3:51	5:14
Aberdeen	2:17	3:35	2:41	3:59	Wespool	3:27	5:25	3:51	5:14
Aberdeen	2:17	3:35	2:41	3:59	Wespool	3:27	5:25	3:51	5:14

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Sun rises

Sun sets: 9:07 pm to 4:50 am

Edinburgh 9:45 pm to 4:38 am

Manchester 9:26 pm to 4:47 am

Perthshire 9:22 pm to 4:18 am

Perthshire 9:22 pm to 4:18 am

Perthshire 9:22 pm to 4:18 am

Perthshire 9:22 pm to 4:18 am

Perthshire 9:22 pm to 4:18 am

Perthshire 9:22 pm to 4:18 am

Perthshire 9:22 pm to 4:18 am

USA \$ 1.694 1.564
Rates for small denomination notes only
as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different
rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates
as at close of trading yesterday.

□ Shareholders get their chance for democracy □ All cleaned out at Hoover □ Bank takes its time over Barings

Bread and circuses

□ TODAY should be declared a public holiday for private investors. Across the capital there is an unparalleled opportunity for a right of reply against those company directors who have most irritated their shareholders in the past year. British Gas, the Prudential and Kingfisher are all holding their annual meetings. Investors pack sandwiches and buy a day return.

Unfortunately, there is a clash in the timing of these events or particularly persistent shareholders could do the rounds. But with Kingfisher holding its meeting at the Dorchester at 11am, British Gas in the Docklands Arena at 11.45am, and the Prudential at noon in the City, there is the chance to catch at least two of the boards before they leave their shareholders to stew for another year.

As a warm-up act, Kingfisher is not bad. Investors might ask some tricky questions about the £3 million pay-off to its four departing directors are receiving, and their contribution to the fall in profits last year. Although Kingfisher is cutting the length of its rolling contracts from three years to two, that does smack of shutting the stable door after the light brigade has charged through it. The meeting will also be chaired by the unfamiliar face Sir Nigel Mobbs, Kingfisher's stand-in chairman, who may get

rattled if the shareholders become difficult.

At the Prudential, Sir Brian Corby is likely to be given an equally rough ride in his last day as chairman. But he is an old hand and more than capable of deflecting questions about regulatory investigations and share options. He at least is partially protected by the strong performance of the Pru's shares in the past year. Shareholders care a far less about corporate governance when those governors are making them wealthy.

The main event is at British Gas. Here the group has been acutely embarrassed by two formal motions opposing the management's pay packages, but, as ever, private investors are likely to be outgunned by the large City institutions. In any case, the 6,000 disgruntled shareholders due to attend should make a great deal of noise, even in defeat.

Annual meetings used to be cosy affairs, with few questions and a ritual vote of thanks. No longer. Shareholder democracy is turning them into true representative meetings, and the opin-

ions of private investors undoubtedly restrain the worst corporate excesses.

There is though a price to be paid for such democracy. Expect the food and drink at annual meetings to deteriorate. It was the Roman emperors who discovered that feeding the masses and treating them to chariot races made them less inclined to riot. Now it no longer works, shareholders who insist on asking awkward questions should not be surprised if the bread and circuses are withdrawn to persuade them to stay away. No matter — the meetings are entertainment enough.

Leaving a vacuum

□ HOOVER is one of the best-known brand names in the world. For decades, it was so respected that it could add value to all manner of domestic appliances, and possibly much else. To purists, its value was diluted by being a generic name for vacuum cleaners, however hard the company tried to protect its



mark. But this is a top league name, the Ford of the kitchen.

Yesterday, however, Hoover's extensive European operations, along with the rights to its name in much of the Middle East and North Africa, were sold for a relatively paltry \$170 million dollars. By common tests, Hoover has been unloaded by Maytag, its recent American parent, at a knockdown price.

The price is less than half last year's sales and realises only 57 per cent of the book value of its assets, such as the British headquarters and three factories in Britain and on the Continent. The Hoover name evidently counted for little. Indeed, Maytag, which retains the North American business has, in effect,

further devalued the brand by dividing world rights.

The humbling of Hoover will become a textbook example of the fragility of even top names. In Britain, it was brought down by a single, ill-conceived sales promotion. The notorious air rickety scheme had nothing to do with the quality or performance of products bearing the Hoover name, but still besmirched it among value-conscious consumers who trusted the brand and formed the bedrock of its market. As gaffes go, this was in the Gerald Ratner class, without the excuse of spontaneity.

That marketing disaster is not, however, the whole story. Hoover also suffered from something almost as surprising, its seemingly mature market, the hapless hunting ground for brand values, was invaded by new products that have been able to establish themselves on the strength of innovation: first Vax, now a strong brand name in its own right, later the Dyson cyclone cleaner.

With luck, Hoover will be revived. Meanwhile, its vicissitudes will strengthen the hand of

cautious accountants who reckon brand names are worth nothing more solid than the goodwill of the moment.

Listening for a distant report

□ Ken and Eddie have always agreed over the need for urgency over the Barings report, although the degree of urgency has proved the subject of considerable external speculation. The report, made up of two parts, will be delivered to the Chancellor early in July permitting publication before ministers pack their buckets and spades.

Part One, designed to establish the precise events that led to the ignominious collapse of Barings amid the debris of Nick Leeson's dealings in derivatives, is complete, but the finishing touches. Such touches involve any amendments following responses from those named in the report. This is much in line with DTI practice, which is hardly surprising bearing in mind that Ian Watt, head of the Bank's

Special Investigations Unit, is spearheading the probe. During his former days at KPMG, Mr Watt was a DTI inspector on the Alexander Howden and Guinness cases.

Part Two, which will focus on the Bank of England's supervisory role, is still being compiled by the Board of Banking Supervision's independent members, led by Sir Alan Hardcastle.

There has been much ado about the timing of the report, less about the problems encountered by Watt who has run up against Singapore's secrecy laws in his attempts to gain access to certain paperwork. Leeson, intent on being extradited from Germany to the UK rather than Singapore, has not been interviewed by Watt's team. Shades of Hamlet without the Prince.

The Ken show

□ KENNETH Clarke seems to have taken the City to his heart since the Treasury started regulating financial services. His latest enviable 11-day jaunt to promote British financial services in India follows equally exotic swings through Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam. No matter that trade rules and promotion are DTI matters and that the City's new travelling supersalesman is wholly self-appointed.

BET spends £70m to buy conference centres company

By CARL MORTSHED

BET, the business services group, is taking over 18 luxurious residential conference centres with the purchase of Style Conferences for £70 million, the first big corporate acquisition for the group since chief executive John Clark launched BET's three-year restructuring programme.

Mr Clark said BET had moved towards its long-term goal of becoming a growth company, announcing yesterday a 22 per cent rise in pre-tax profits before exceptional items to £111 million. He said that revenues were flat, with profit growth coming from cost control, in line with the company's previous forecasts. "Revenue growth will start to come through in the second half of 1995/6," he predicted, explaining that revenue generation and product development programmes took 18 months to achieve their result. BET shares climbed 6p to 126½p, although analysts were surprised by the acquisition of Style which, with a strong asset base, did not fit the profile of a typical service business. BET is issuing 14.3 million shares to pay for Style, with the balance of £54 million in cash from existing resources.

Style Conferences made operating profits of £8.2 million last year from its 18 sites. Pre-tax profits were £6.8 million. Style also operates conference centres for its large UK and international clients and owns VenueSolve, a dedicated sales and marketing business. Mr Clark said there was room to increase the business.

BET's operating margin jumped two points to 6.7 per cent in the year to April 1, with the recovery led by Plant Services. The division rents heavy construction equipment and raised its operating profit from £2 million to £3.8 million despite an 8 per cent dip in revenues last year to £374 million. Mr Clark said that the market for construction equipment in the UK had been poor and BET had shrunk the



John Clark reported a 22 per cent growth in profits

business, redeploying assets abroad.

Business Services, which include cleaning and personnel services, edged profits up 3 per cent to £3.3 million after one-off costs of £2 million for insurance liabilities in the US.

BET is refocusing its business services to target groups of customers in a bid to exit the commodity end of the market. In the UK, BET's cleaning services gained contracts with British Telecom and at Heath-

row Airport. But the UK personnel agencies are still in the red, carrying the cost of rents on previously vacated premises.

At the year-end BET had net cash of £34 million, despite increased capital expenditure. Mr Clark said that last year's spend of £149 million would be repeated in the current year. The dividend is up 23 per cent to 4p for the year.

Tempus, page 26

AIM issues first list of advisers

The London Stock Exchange has published its initial list of approved nominated advisers for the Alternative Investment Market (AIM), the new market for smaller and growing companies that is due to start trading on June 19.

The 24 applicants to date represent a cross-section of professions including lawyers, accountants and stockbrokers and have a wide geographic spread ranging from Edinburgh to Bristol and Dublin. Theresa Wallis, AIM's chief operating officer, said: "Advisers are required to confirm to the exchange that the directors of the company have been advised and guided on their responsibilities and obligations in respect of the AIM rules and that the relevant rules have been complied with."

The exchange will monitor nominated advisers on an annual basis and sanctions for poor performance will include removal from the register. □ The Stock Exchange also confirmed plans to move to a five-day rolling settlement period (T+5) from June 26, compared with two-day rolling settlement (T+2) at present.

B&E cuts losses

Black & Edgington, which reduced interim losses to £421,000 before tax from £1.2 million in the six months to January 31, is set to announce the disposal of its temporary structures business to concentrate on the development of generic pharmaceutical products. Losses per share were cut to 0.08p from 0.25p. There is again no dividend.

Farnell expands

Farnell Electronics, the distributor of electronic components, is acquiring Combined Precision Components (CPC) for a cash consideration of £30.5 million. CPC's net assets were valued at £5 million at March 31. In the three months to end-March the company earned profits of £853,000 on sales of £6 million.

Gander rights

Gander Holdings, the property company whose shares trade under the Stock Exchange Rule 4.2, is raising £7.5 million by way of a two-for-five rights issue at 8.5p a share, underwritten by UBS.

Babcock in talks on energy link-up

By NEIL BENNETT

BABCOCK International, the contract engineering group, is in talks with potential partners to create a worldwide joint venture for its energy business. The discussions follow the group's surge back to a profit of £7.8 million in the year to March, after losses of £41 million.

John Parker, chairman, said he had held discussions with "two or three" potential joint venture partners. The group wants to merge its loss-making energy division, which makes boilers for power stations, with a company that has complementary technology and strong market coverage, particularly in North America. Babcock's energy division

lost £11.2 million during the year, which was offset by profits from most of the other divisions.

After moving into profit, Babcock is paying its first dividend for two years, a foreign income dividend of 0.4p. It is also consolidating five of its shares into one to improve tradeability.

The group confirmed it has set up Railcare, jointly with Siemens, to buy two of British Rail's maintenance yards. Babcock is now sole bidder for Rosyth Royal Navy dockyard, which it already manages, and is in a consortium bidding for the entire base.

Tempus, page 26

Meconic looks for £17.5m from listing

By PHILIP PANGALOS

MECONIC, the specialist fine chemicals company that makes opiates and other controlled drugs used for medicines and pain killers, plans to float next month in a move likely to capitalise the group, which is based in Edinburgh, at about £40 million.

Meconic was formed after a £17.4 million management buyout of Macfarlan Smith from Glaxo in 1990. The group expects to raise about £17.5 million through a placing in mid-June that is likely to provide about £10 million of new money. The proceeds will be used to pay off debts of about £9.4 million and allow future expansion, with the possible acquisition of suitable

niche products. Baring Brothers has been appointed financial adviser, with Smith New Court broker to the issue.

Meconic's pre-tax profits advanced to £4.18 million from £2.83 million in the year to April 28, on turnover of £29.6 million (£26.4 million), with opiates accounting for about 75 per cent of the group's business.

About 70 management and staff hold 40 per cent of Meconic, with Dr Marshall Smalley, the managing director, holding about 12 per cent. Among institutions, 3i has 30 per cent and NatWest 20 per cent. These shareholdings are expected to be diluted by about 20 per cent post-float.

FINANCIAL NEWS FROM BANK OF SCOTLAND



1605 1995
100 YEARS OF BANKING SERVICE

Bank of Scotland Annual Results

	1995	1994
OPERATING PROFIT BEFORE PROVISIONS	£650.0m	£568.8m
PROFIT BEFORE TAXATION	£449.7m	£288.7m
TOTAL CAPITAL RESOURCES	£2,731m	£2,460m
TOTAL ASSETS	£34,104m	£30,748m
EARNINGS PER ORDINARY STOCK UNIT	22.3p	12.2p
DIVIDEND PER ORDINARY STOCK UNIT	5.82p	5.05p

- Operating Profit before provisions up 14 per cent on 1994
- Profit before taxation a record £449.7 million
- Dividend increased by 15.25 per cent
- Cost: Income ratio 49.8 per cent



For a copy of the Bank's Annual Report contact the Marketing Services and Public Relations Department, Bank of Scotland, Glasgow House, PO Box 12, 61 Grassmarket, Edinburgh EH3 9JF.

Ashanti warning on gold output target

By COLIN CAMPBELL, MINING CORRESPONDENT

ASHANTI GOLDFIELDS, the Lonrho-managed Ghanaian gold mine, said yesterday that it would probably miss its one million ounce gold production target. It had previously expected to hit the million mark by September 30.

Sam Jonah, Ashanti's chief executive, said in the interim report to March 31 that Ashanti was still "a one million ounce" gold mine. He is confident that target will be reached by the end of December — three months late. He said operations had been hit by drought and floods.

He added: "The company has no flexibility to absorb any further unexpected setbacks in this financial year."

Ashanti reported a 22 per cent increase in gold production to 464,432 ounces in the

first half. However, cash operating costs of underground operations were \$191 an ounce, compared with \$187 in the previous full year.

Surface costs rose from an exceptionally low level of \$157 in the year to September 30, 1994, to \$212 an ounce and "were above original expectations". Pre-tax profit was 21 per cent higher at \$51.7 million and net profit was 15 per cent up at \$46.7 million. A maiden interim dividend of 0.125 cents a share is declared.

Ashanti is expanding fast in West Africa, and the mine's gold-hedging programme ensured an average gold price of \$397, against a world market average price of \$383.

Tempus, page 26

THE TIMES RENTALS

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2.00 America's Top Ten (1994/95) 4.00 On the Line Side (1992/93) 4.20 The Time the Place (1992/93) 4.80 Night Shift (1991/92) 5.00 Freeview (1993/94)

10.00 Brookside (1992/93) 10.30 E.T. (1992/93) 11.00 Dispatches (1992/93) 12.15am The Golden Gate (1991/92) 12.45 Home Improvement (1993/94)

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Trading thin as investors stay in holiday mood

SHARE prices were poised precariously above the 3,300 resistance level as the stock market made a subdued start to trading after the bank holiday break.

Trading conditions were despatched thin, with investors and traders choosing to extend their holiday. By the close of business just 439 million shares had changed hands, with the FT-SE 100 index ending an early nine point lead to finish 1.2 lower at 3,309.9.

Overshadowed by further fluctuations on the currency markets and without any positive lead from Wall Street, it was left up to the gilt market to make much of the early running, with gains stretching to 2 1/2 as European investors continued to take a bullish line about interest rates short term.

VSEL firmed up to £17.86 as speculators braced themselves for British Aerospace to re-launch its bid for the company. Earlier this month, the Government cleared bids for VSEL, from both BAE and GEC, 2p better at 317 1/2. BAE firmed up to 330.

The big food retailers stood out with some useful gains that enabled them to extend their recent strong run. Société Générale Strauss Turnbull has joined the growing band of stockbrokers to recommend the sector.

High on the Strauss buy list is J Sainsbury, Britain's biggest food retailer, up 10p at 45 1/2. There were also gains for Argyle, 8p to 33 1/2, Asda, 3p to 83 1/2, and Tesco, 2p to 290p.

BBA Group has gone on the offensive in its battle to win control of Holvis, the Swiss group, in the face of opposition from International Paper. It has snapped up 98,350 shares, or 11.1 per cent of Holvis, for which it has offered £247 million.

International Paper, which already has 25 per cent of Holvis, claims the bid is unfair and is ready to increase its offer from £215 million to £270 million. But before this, Holvis must abandon its agreement to sell Fibrelux to BBA for £132 million, if the full offer should fail. BBA closed 2p higher at 233 1/2.

Black & Edgington, the tent maker that has seen its share price more than double this year, marked time at 44 1/2. Plans are afoot to turn the USM-quoted concern into a fully-listed pharmaceutical group. The new management team headed by Ian Gornie



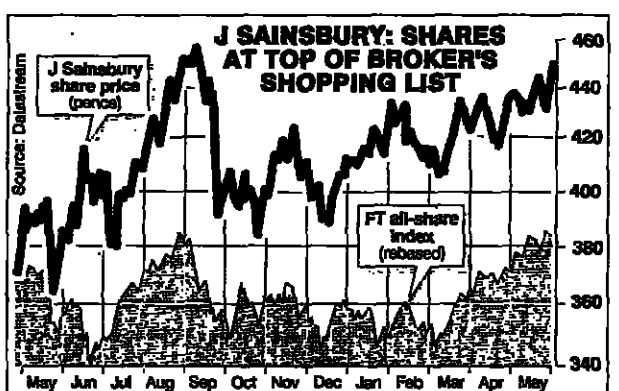
John Parker, of Babcock, with Nick Salmon and Erik Porter

Smith, former head of Medeva, along with David Leede and Nigel Wray are writing to shareholders with an outline of their plans.

They bought into Black & Edgington in January and have since acquired the options on two drugs for the treatment of diabetes. In the first six months of the current year, the group reduced pre-

De La Rue, the security printer, was a nervous market falling 15p to 936p ahead of full-year figures. Brokers are becoming worried that profits will fall short of expectations. Whispers around the Square Mile claim the integration of Portals, for which it paid £640 million, has not gone according to plan.

tax losses from £1.2 million to £421,000. TLG, the former Thorn EMI lighting division that was the subject of a management buyout last year, fell 12p to 149p as a number of its biggest shareholders announced plans to sell shares in the market place. As the company announced full-year figures showing pre-tax profits up from £11.4 million to £19.1 million, Thorn EMI and



May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May

Britain's biggest supplier of conference and training centres. The announcement coincided with full-year figures showing pre-tax profits one-third higher at £122 million.

BET said the acquisition of Style Conferences would immediately enhance earnings and Kleinwort Benson, the broker, raised its profits forecast for the current year from £124 million to £132 million.

Heywood Williams fell 13p to 253p after warning that margins at its American operations were coming under increasing pressure. The news emerged during a visit by brokers to the group's US arm to take a look at acquisitions made in the past two years. The US continues to account for more than 50 per cent of overall sales and is expected to make another significant contribution to profits.

A profits warning from Harrington Kilbridge, the publisher, came too late to affect the share price, which closed unchanged at 39p. The group says it has shut its conference business. The group also said that after undertaking a review of the business, it had become apparent that results for 1994 would be significantly worse than anticipated.

GILT-EDGED: Prices shrugged off any worries about the latest volatility on the world's currency markets. Choosing instead to chase German bonds higher in their trading. The best gains were again at the longer end as investors continued switching out of shorts after publication of the Government's proposals about the tax treatment of gilts. But even here, prices closed below their best of the day as the Bund turned easier in late trading.

In the futures pit, the June series of the Long Gilt touched a peak for the day of £108 1/2 before eventually closing £7 1/2 better at £107 1/2 as a total of 42,000 contracts were completed.

conventional issues. Treasury 8 per cent 2013 rose 4 to £100 1/2, while at the shorter end, Treasury 8 per cent 2000 firmed seven ticks to £101 1/2.

NEW YORK: US shares turned lower in early trading, with the technology sector coming under particular pressure as investors took profits. At midday, the Dow Jones industrial average was down 11.76 points to 4,357.24.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 4,357.24 (-11.76)
S&P Composite 522.08 (-1.57)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 15,762.97 (+188.94)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 9,945.30 (-70.87)

Amsterdam:
EEX Index 428.53 (-2.13)

Sydney:
ASX 2,021.0 (-7.2)

Frankfurt:
DAX 2,087.65 (-23.24)

Singapore:
Straits 2,162.48 (+0.08)

Brussels:
General 763.18 (+8.13)

Paris:
CAC-40 1,927.30 (+0.52)

Zurich:
SIX Gen 647.40 (+3.10)

London:
FT 30 2,506.2 (-2.1)

FT 100 2,009.9 (-1.2)

FT-SE Mid 250 3,642.6 (+0.8)

FT-SE 250 1,648.3 (+0.9)

FT-SE Europe 100 1,340.0 (+1.4)

FT A All-Share 1,627.94 (+0.4)

FT Non Financials 1,749.76 (+1.03)

FT Food Interest 113.39 (-0.18)

FT Govt Sec 94.39 (+0.17)

ESCU 1.1630

ESDR 1.1630

RPI 149.0 Apr (3.3%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

Brit Aero Cap US p/p	723	+
Dunlop Tyre p/p	105	+
Dunlop Tyre p/p	105	+
Flintbury Worldwide	101	+
General Cable (100)	170	+
Gus Carter (80)	93	-
Langdon Foods (3)	34	+
Oryx India	650	+
Oryx India Ws	250	+
Procast Int (125)	141	+
Schroder Inc Gth Fund	106	+
Schroder Inc Gth Ws	27	+

RIGHTS ISSUES

Daniels (S) n/p (24)	8	+
Prime People n/p (4)	1	+
Regal Hotel n/p (35)	1	+
Scott & New n/p (475)	35	+

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:	
Morland	492p (+8p)
Morgan Sindall	57p (+6p)
Chitway	569p (+8p)
Difka	514p (+8p)
Financial Corp	308p (+8p)
Molins	685p (+10p)
Ransomes	55p (+8p)
Siebs	602p (+8p)
Com Union	608p (+8p)
Boomerang Int	512p (+10p)
GLS	604p (+8p)
Moss Bros	453p (+8p)
Mieys	386p (+10p)
Parkland	170p (+8p)
Airtours	433p (+8p)
Thorn EMI	1250p (+8p)
FALLS:	
Heywood Wm	253p (-13p)
Reidand	453p (-5p)
Mitral	206p (-8p)
TLG	149p (-12p)
Telapex	491p (-6p)
Bowater	488p (-8p)
Plysu	206p (-8p)
ADT	720p (-10p)
Unipain	230p (-10p)
Horseshoe Small	108p (-7p)
BA	811p (-6p)
Euro Disney	213p (-14p)

Closing Prices Page 28

TEMPUS

A new Style BET

IF BET has followed the fashion in downsizing — or right-sizing, to use the politically correct phrase — its businesses, the purchase of Style Conference scarcely fits the trend. BET's profits recovery followed textbook MBA procedures of shrinking the company by streamlining management and working its capital harder. Only when the core business weaknesses are addressed does the book say a company can expand with acquisitions and internally generated revenue.

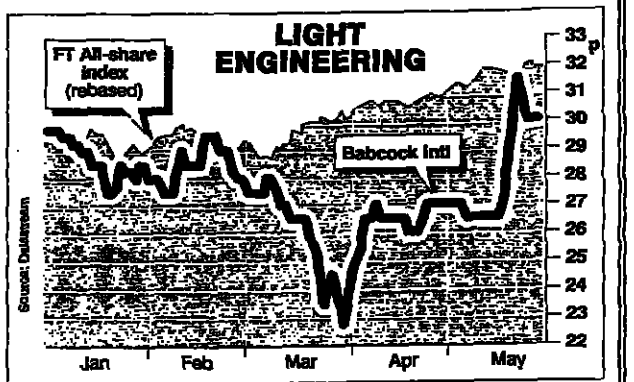
Yesterday BET showed evidence that the first chapter of the rulebook had been well-read with a boost to profits from cost-cutting and better use of assets. Noises at the half-year led the City to expect a deal but few expected anything as idiosyncratic as a £70 million package of 18 luxury conference centres.

Babcock

THE re-engineering of Babcock International is beginning to bear fruit. The energy division is struggling to shake off the damage from old contracts, but at least the restructuring is sufficiently complete to allow the profits from the other divisions to show through. The company is even strong enough to dole out a token dividend.

Babcock has not entirely shaken off the sins of its past. The energy division is likely to stay in the red this year, in spite of the recent Chinese power station orders. In addition, the group has taken on a new loss-maker in Caldwell, a furnace dust recycling plant in Texas, which needs to triple output to turn a profit.

With loss-making contracts completed and the order book strengthened, the power divi-



Jan Feb Mar Apr May

Ashanti

STOCK MARKETS never like missed prospectus forecasts. So Ashanti was fortunate that its share price barely fluttered from around \$24 after its interim results fell short of expectations yesterday.

The Ghanaian gold mine is not going to reach its trumpeted one million ounce production level by end September. With luck, it might hit target by the end of December.

Cash operating costs, which range from \$191 an ounce underground to \$212 an ounce on surface were, by management's own admission, above original expectations. The \$199 overall average cost is, however, still relatively low by world standards, and reserves remain extensive.

Nature dealt Ashanti two cruel blows in the six months to end March 31 — first there was drought, then there were floods. The combined hit was

17,500 ounces, thereby restraining interim production to a 22 per cent increase to 464,432 ounces.

However, Ashanti's gold hedging programme is as a result. This ensured an average gold price of \$397 an ounce in the interim, \$401 is locked in for the second half, and for five years beyond. 2.25 million ounces have been covered at \$456 an ounce.

Ashanti's exploration rush across West Africa, at a time when South African golds are beset by their own worries, makes the shares worth following, and the investment fashion is still supporting them. But a prospective p/e of 22 and a 1.5 per cent yield does limit short term excitement.

TLG

Investcorp, the Saudi backers of the buy-out of TLG from Thorn-EMI were wise not to sell more shares last November when the stock was offered at 115p. At that time the

new issues market was becalmed and Thorn had to scale back its offering. Predictably the shares have taken a pounding from news that 28 per cent of the company is to be placed. No doubt the share price fall contains an element of short-selling by investors interested in driving down the placing price to lower levels.

Guessing the extent of the price recovery when the brokers have found a home for the stock is more difficult. TLG has posted a good set of figures and claims market share gains but the company is fighting stiff price competition in a mature market. TLG generates more than £20 million of cash before investment and investors paid off most of the company's debt last year. With its core geographic markets showing little growth, the question that will soon face Thorn is where to invest the shareholders money.

EDITED BY NEIL BENNETT

COMMODITIES

LONDON COMMODITY EXCHANGE

Commodity	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
COCOA													
May	939.92	Dec	1091.10										
June	941.20	Jan	1091.10										
July	942.40	Feb	1091.10										
Aug	943.60	Mar	1091.10										
Sept	944.80	Apr	1091.10										
Oct	946.00	May	1091.10										
Nov	947.20	June	1091.10										
Dec	948.40	July	1091.10										
Jan	949.60	Aug	1091.10										
Feb	950.80	Sept	1091.10										
Mar	952.00	Oct	1091.10										
Apr	953.20	Nov	1091.10										
May	954.40	Dec	1091.10										

ROBUSTA COFFEE (F0B)

Commodity	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Robusta													
May	278.27	Dec	278.27										
June	279.47	Jan	278.27										
July	280.67	Feb	278.27										
Aug	281.87	Mar	278.27										
Sept	283.07	Apr	278.27										
Oct	284.27	May	278.27										
Nov	285.47	June	278.27										
Dec	286.67	July	278.27										
Jan	287.87	Aug	278.27										
Feb	289.07	Sept	278.27										
Mar	290.27	Oct	278.27										
Apr	291.47	Nov	278.27										
May	292.67	Dec	278.27										

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

Commodity	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Beef													
May	95.12	Dec	122.27										
June	95.12	Jan	122.27										
July	95.12	Feb	122.27										
Aug	95.12	Mar	122.27										
Sept	95.12	Apr	122.27										
Oct	95.12	May	122.27										
Nov	95.12	June	122.27										
Dec	95.12	July	122.27										
Jan	95.12	Aug	122.27										
Feb	95.12	Sept	122.27										
Mar	95.12	Oct	122.27										
Apr	95.12	Nov	122.27										
May	95.12	Dec	122.27										

ICE-FAR (London 600mm)

Commodity	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
ICE-FAR													
May	17.40	Dec	17.40										
June	17.40	Jan	17.40										
July	17.40	Feb	17.40										
Aug	17.40	Mar	17.40										
Sept	17.40	Apr	17.40										
Oct	17.40	May	17.40										
Nov	17.40	June	17.40										
Dec	17.40	July	17.40										
Jan	17.40	Aug	17.40										
Feb	17.40	Sept	17.40										
Mar	17.40	Oct	17.40										
Apr	17.40	Nov	17.40										
May	17.40	Dec	17.40										

CRUDE OILS (\$/barrel FOB)

Commodity	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May</
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THE
TIMES
CITY
DIARY

A nice little
number

RUN out of ideas where to host your next luncheon? Spare £7,500? Then try one of the capital's finest addresses — Number One London, where bookings are being taken for corporate hospitality after its reopening on June 15. Apsley House at Hyde Park Corner was built by Robert Adam in the 1770s and became the home of the Duke of Wellington. It acquired its popular name because of its position just past a toll gate into London from the west. Merchant bankers and the aeronautical industry are among the first to inquire about Number One's availability after its three-and-a-half-year refurbishment at a cost of over £6 million. If the £7,500 booking fee seems a little rich for you, don't worry. There is a Tube station nearby.

YOU'VE heard of trains being delayed because of the wrong type of snow. Now hear this from a Eurostar train at Waterloo yesterday. "This train has been delayed because of excess baggage".

Paritback

THE Eurobond team at Société Générale Strauss Turnbull will be back at full strength this week, though not necessarily with all hands. Jim Staples, who broke his hand playing football for Ireland in the World Cup in South Africa at the weekend, is flying home soon.



"That will teach them"

Formation flying

ONE person who won't be at Kingfisher's AGM today is Nigel Whitaker, the corporate affairs director who is collecting a near £1 million payoff. As today is Nigel's last day at the office, he might be nursing a headache, and could be too delicate to hear shareholders asking questions about fat payoffs. But Tim Clement-Jones, a Kingfisher executive, and Jackie Brock-Davies, corporate communications manager, will be in attendance. If they both have a headache, my sympathies. Nigel, Jackie and Tim jointly hosted a "farewell to Kingfisher" party last night. Today is also Jackie's last day, while Tim, the company secretary, leaves at the end of June.

Dressing down

RAYMOND (Boxy) Boxall retires today from NatWest Markets after almost 44 years in the City. Aged 66, he started at Newson-Smith as a Blue Button. That year boot laces were all the rage. Bony arrived on his first day with such a tie, to be told "don't you ever wear that again". Bony, 60 yesterday, rose to become a director of NatWest Securities.

Tie with past

NICK DOAK, press officer at Lloyd's, also chose an unfortunate tie to wear for yesterday's annual meeting. It was covered in sheep, provoking memories of a remark made some years ago by Robert Hiscox, a deputy chairman at Lloyd's. "If God had not meant names to be sheared," Mr Hiscox said, "he would not have made them sheep."

COLIN CAMPBELL

Union elections highlight the struggle for influence

Philip Bassett looks at the implications as voting begins for the next generation of union leaders.

Back in the days when the leader of the TGWU transport union was viewed by the public as being more powerful than the Prime Minister, business needed to know about trade unions: who was on the way out, who was coming up — where the power lay. Now, with the decline of union membership, finances and strength, business does not need to know. Employers and employees can and do get by without unions — so who cares?

In each case, the reality behind such a view is different. Just as the insubstantiality of perceived union power in the 1960s and 1970s was demonstrated when the Conservative Government under Margaret Thatcher pricked the bubble on which it was based, so too is the idea of their present-day irrelevance overdue.

Take the car industry. Although Honda in the UK is non-union, both Nissan and Toyota recognise and know UK unions. Indeed, the worldwide head of Toyota knew the internal politics of the AEEU engineering union in sufficiently close detail to be able to talk extensively on it with visiting UK union specialists before the company set up at its Derby site.

Although the unions may be long out of Downing Street — and may not get much more of a look-in by Labour under Tony Blair is returned at the next election — at workplace level in unionised plants around Britain, unions are still players.

They can be and are avoided and ignored, even kicked out of the business completely by full or partial derecognition. But in many firms, squaring away the TGWU, getting the GMB on board, or pulling in the AEEU is still a significant fact of industrial operations.

So knowing who is coming up and where the power will lay is still important, although less so than it once was. As British Rail may find again over pay, and as Railtrack painfully found last summer over signalworkers' productivity, the internal power and political balances in trade union leaderships can still significantly affect a business.

That is why the current round of trade union elections is significant. They are the most extensive for a decade, and will set in place the leaders of Britain's main trade unions for the rest of the century.

The struggle for the leadership of the Transport and General Workers' Union is the most important — for unions overall, for the TUC, for Mr Blair's Labour Party, and for business. But elections in Unison, the GMB and the AEEU, which are all in effect under way now, are also significant.

Though shrunk to a shadow of its former self, with probably about 800,000 members now compared to two million at its height in 1979, the election for the general secretaryship of the TGWU is about more than how far Mr Blair's writ will run in the trade unions.

But it is, of course, that. Indeed, because of the closeness to Mr Blair of one of the candidates, Jack Dromey, TGWU public services national secretary and husband of Harriet Harman, Mr Blair's Shadow Employment Sec-



Influential voice: Harold Wilson and James Callaghan listen to Frank Cousins, of the TG&G, in 1966

retary, the central issue in the TG&G election has not been the union's manifest decline as a mechanism — whether for good or bad for the economy — of winning wage rises and job security for its paying members, but on the more minor aspect to those members of its relations with Labour.

Both men have been criss-crossing the country in search of votes. Mr Dromey took a group of TG&G members with him to Brussels yesterday as part of a legal battle and a route that has won victories before.

Elections in the TG&G used to be relatively easy to read, for those sufficiently skilled at Transport House Kremlinology: the signposts were there, and, in recent years, they have mostly pointed to the same conclusion — by hook or by crook, the left in the union was good at winning elections.

However, without the union's internal electoral machines running at full strength, the chances of Mr Dromey unseating the incumbent are higher than they would otherwise have been. He can take comfort from the fact that it is still possible for union candidates to come through the middle: for instance, Les Priestley has just been elected president of the IRSF tax staff union against the opposition of two candidates formally supported by the union's left and right-wing groupings.

But the influence of the TGWU's activists in the outcome of the union's elections is still strong. Even though nominations by individual TGWU union branches for a candidate may

often rest on little more than the branch secretary and chairman putting their heads together, they have in the past been a good guide to the eventual outcome. While individual members, voting at home in a postal ballot, may make wholly independent choices, at present the branch nominations suggest a 3-2 win for Mr Morris when the result is declared on June 23.

The outcome of the TGWU election is probably already decided. Ballot papers were sent out last week, and as in most union elections, most votes are cast early in the dark days of the TGWU not too long ago, many were cast often too.

The bulk of voting has probably already been done, and the victor in effect determined — if not yet fully known.

Not so yet in the other union contests running throughout this year. In what is now the biggest trade union, Unison, the current associate general secretary, Rodney Bickerstaffe, is widely expected in the autumn to be elected to succeed the retiring Alan Jinkinson as the union's leader.

Unison is judged to have failed so far to carry through properly the merger of the three unions Nalco, Nupe and Cohse from which it was formed — especially by heavily thinning out its large-scale bureaucracies and rationalising its property base. Its reverses over Clause Four, at one point deciding to back it and then to oppose it, typified what some see as a serious lack of control from the centre, which many people close to the unions look to Mr Bickerstaffe to resolve.

Either we modernise as a union or we are doomed to decline

Control in the GMB will be retained by John Edmonds, its general secretary for the past nine years. Indeed, he is unlikely to be opposed for the post when nominations close at the end of June. But in spite of his eventual backing for Mr Blair's Clause Four changes, supporters of the Labour leader still see him as a loose cannon.

The contest to succeed Bill Jordan as president of the AEEU is more confusing. Again, a merger — between the engineers and electricians — has only partly come off, and the dominant right wing in the union is split over its candidate, though most union and business observers would favour John Allen, executive member from the West Midlands, over Jackie Crystal, the North East member.

All these elections will be important in putting into place a union leadership which, in spite of the decline in trade union power, not just new Labour but British industry will still want to do business with. Inevitably, the TGWU contest will garner the most attention — not least for the correct reason that the stakes are highest there.

Defying stealing his rival's label, Mr Morris claims the "best modernising record in the trade union movement over the last four years" with advances on union finances and membership services. The election, he says, is all about trust, experience, leadership and loyalty.

Mr Dromey is more apocalyptic. Taking a Blairist line that people feel insecure, unprotected, unhelped and that they cannot be left that way any longer, he sees the choice as clear: "Either we modernise as a union — or we are doomed to decline into irrelevance." Business, as well as union leaders and their members, will be watching the outcome keenly.

Christine Buckley on the rise of a rental chain

The Crazy world of hiring goods

The three-piece suite costs £8.99, the fridge is a snip at £3.99 and the tumble dryer is yours for £4.00. And if you're tired of it, it's no problem — you can take them back and get some others.

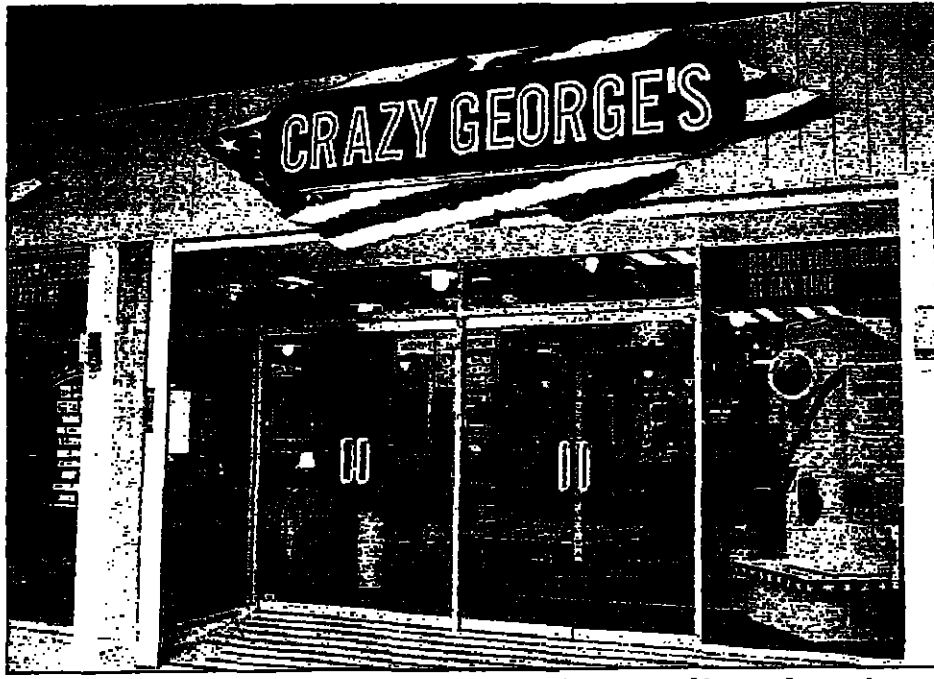
A consumer dream? Well almost, according to the company providing the goods, Thorn EMI, the global entertainment and rental group. There is just one drawback — the amounts are weekly.

Thorn EMI, well known for its recording and retail music business and electrical and electronic goods rental operations, will rent you a bed for the night, or rather several nights, through Crazy George's, its rapidly expanding chain of furniture, home goods and all-purpose electrical stores.

Two new stores open on Saturday, taking the number of outlets to 12. By the end of the year there will be 28 — just 20 months after the first one opened.

Based predominantly around the North West and the West Midlands, Crazy George's targets what Thorn EMI terms the "cash-constrained", people without substantial amounts of disposable cash and without ready access to credit.

The development of the stores forms a major part of the international company's drive to expand its rental



Crazy George's shops are a major part of EMI's drive to expand its rental operations

operations and to offer, says Mike Metcalf, Thorn EMI's UK chief executive, flexibility and choice to the type of customers who are often denied it. "We see ourselves as providing easy access to the consumer durables that our customers want." Financing is, the company says, as flexible as the customer wants. If they are paid weekly they can pay their rentals weekly. The cash-constrained form a big and largely untapped mar-

ket, according to Thorn EMI's research. Mr Metcalf says: "We estimate that across Europe something in excess of 30 million households fall into that category. If we only managed 5 per cent penetration into those households, and that is a figure we would be disappointed with, then that would be a £1 billion pounds a year business."

The move into the rental of durables as opposed to the more traditional market of

electronics was not, Mr Metcalf says, born entirely of the recession and poor spending on the high street. "It was a fundamental rethink of our business."

Crazy George's stores, which do good business in the United States, have worldwide implications, he believes.

Consumers are similar the world over — what someone wants in Croydon is likely to be what someone wants in China. In the US, rental and

especially rental-to-own arrangements are big business. There, you can rent jewellery courtesy of Thorn EMI. Adornments for hire may come to the UK though there are no immediate plans for market testing.

Such a global approach is in line with the company's management strategy. Thorn EMI seeks to speak with one voice and at the end of March it formed Thorn Europe — a pan-European management structure — to develop, it says, the synergy potentials within Europe.

One voice, but a huge amount of diversification, is on the cards for Thorn EMI in the UK. Even car hire and holiday sales could be on its agenda, says Mr Metcalf. The basic need of the customer together with the attractions of a basic rental concept and rental-to-own arrangement are adaptable for a multitude of commodities and services.

Along with the need-to-rent market there is the want-to-rent market, especially in the case of personal computers. It is just a case of fine-tuning the market to address different consumer bases.

Mr Metcalf adds: "Frankly, whether it is a television or a piece of furniture or an appliance or a bit of jewellery or potentially a car, it doesn't matter to us. Our job is to provide it efficiently and on attractive terms."

UK executives answer call of Australia

Top pay and perks are luring managers
Down Under, reports Rachel Bridge

A growing number of Britain's higher-ranking executives, fed up with the pressure on pay and perks, are heading to Australia to seek a better life. Australia offers warmer weather and a better chance to scale the corporate ladder.

Joanne West, of Sydney-based PA Consulting, a recruitment consultancy that has itself just chosen a new chief executive from the UK, says: "The prospect of a better lifestyle is an important factor, but there are also a growing number of interesting senior executive appointments over here."

Australia is becoming not just a lifestyle destination, but also an employment destination — we are perceived to have emerged as a viable option for senior executives on a worldwide basis, partly because of some of the interesting things we are doing here."

Andrew Banks, managing director of Morgan and Banks, a recruitment consultancy, says: "Australia offers the chance for a senior executive to go from being a middle-sized fish in the UK pond to being a large-sized fish in the Australian pond. Australia gives them the chance to move from running a division of a large company to running their own show."

Chris Tideman, former chief executive of Burton Group's retail arm, did just that, moving to Australia 11 months ago for the high-profile post of chief executive of David Jones, one of the country's three major retailers. Now, as one of Australia's most prominent businessmen, Mr Tideman says that, as well as the appeal of the lifestyle, the way business is done is a big plus.

"Here, everyone works hard, but they play hard, too," he says. "Australia is a great place to do business, it is less formal and less starchy. Then there's the joy of living in a beautiful place."

The path of Britons heading to Australia has been eased by the growing willingness of Australian companies to look overseas for senior appointments. Mr Banks says: "In the past five or six years, Australia has become much more outward looking and has started to

have a global perspective about getting the world's best."

He says he likes to recruit from the UK because it offers global competitiveness, wide choice, few language and cultural differences, and much greater willingness by executives to relocate compared with their American counterparts. There is also awareness that senior UK executives can bring particular skills, such as in retailing. "Britain is still seen as being a nation of shopkeepers," says one analyst.

Companies in Australia are also prepared to pay the salaries they need to secure the person they want. Ms West says: "If a company is prepared to mount a global search for the right person, then generally they will put their money where their mouth is. The salary is seldom an inhibitor to relocating here."

Australia has not seen an outpour over executive perks either. Mr Banks says: "There is still the opportunity to make some serious money through share options if an executive can deliver results."

The latest Briton to make the trek is David Hearn, who is leaving his role as chief executive of the United Biscuits European snack foods business to become chief executive of Goodman Fielder, the Australian food group. Few doubt that it will be a challenging job — Hearn will be the company's fourth chief executive in five years and is arriving when profits have halved. The rewards will be there if he succeeds. As part of his salary package, Hearn is being issued with six million share options.

Also booking a flight to Australia will be Philip Bowman, an Australian by birth who has spent much of his working life with Bass, latterly as group finance director and then chief executive of the brewer's retail division. He joins Coles Myer, the Australian retailer, as finance director next month.

Ms West says: "There is a closer fit for senior executives from the UK, particularly in regards to understanding the industrial relations scene over here."

6 Australia gives them the chance to run their own show?

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LEASING & ASSET FINANCE

FOCUS

N 43

Asset financiers are poised for action at the first sign of the 'feel-good' factor, David Young says

Now is the time to invest

The power to provide the light at the end of the recessionary tunnel will probably have been generated at a power station built with leasing finance, and the train that could take you towards it would almost certainly have been paid for in a similar way.

The UK leasing and asset finance industry is now detecting signs that companies are preparing for large-scale investment in new equipment and in replacing old plant and facilities, which should have been replaced by the end of the 1980s. The "feel-good" factor may not have finally arrived, but when it does the leasing industry is poised to build on the record which has kept it industry simmering since the last boom period of 1989.

However, the industry is now looking to the Government for new initiatives in the autumn which will lead to companies making the final step from planning and talking about new investments to actually placing orders and negotiating the finance.

"We are not asking for a wholesale change in Government policy," says Tony Jukes, chairman of the Finance and Leasing Association, "but the economy does need a nudge in the right direction. A change in the level of capital allowances is what we need to stimulate investment."

The members of the FLA are ideally placed to feel the faintest flutter in the pulse of the UK economy. Last year its members provided £14.8 billion worth of finance for British companies and are responsible for providing 30 per cent of all UK fixed investments and 80 per cent of consumer credit. FLA members now have a total of £59 billion invested in British industry, providing equipment from photocopyers to power stations and fleets of Ford Fiestas to Boeing 747s.

Mr Jukes, who is also managing director of Hill



Tony Jukes hopes the Government will recognise the leasing industry's contributions

Samuel Asset Finance, said: "Our industry makes a significant contribution to the growth of the UK economy. My aim is to ensure that this contribution is more widely recognised within the Government." The FLA has already told the Government that it has detected a worrying lack of investment intentions among firms, with many using profits to repay debts and to rebuild liquid assets rather than in

increasing capacity for the future. The FLA has gone as far as telling the Government that if the trend continues industry will face severe problems achieving the output required to meet export targets and any expected upturn in domestic demand. It could be argued with some force that the Government would be unwise to ignore the views of the FLA. Asset-based finance remains one of the few sources of

medium-term finance for smaller companies — a sector that some members of the Government claim as their own creation — and one of the only places that start-up companies can turn to for funds. There are three reasons why it is attractive. Assets cannot easily be repossessed by the finance house as long as payments are maintained, which gives a company a certain stability. Small business-

es are also more likely to raise fixed-rate finance rather than the variable rate of most overdrafts. Thirdly, hire purchase and leasing offer a variety of opportunities to use what limited capital allowances exist in a tax-efficient manner.

The FLA can point to statistics which show that about 50 per cent of small companies fund their equipment purchases through hire purchase or leasing. This is because many companies have discovered hire purchase is barely more expensive than finance leasing where the asset reverts to the lessor company at the end of the lease, and leasing is attractive to new companies that have no detailed financial history and no likelihood of an overdraft being granted.

That is why finance and hire purchase is attractive for companies with assets which in turn explains the pivotal role that members of the FLA have played in making it possible for some management buy-outs of bus companies to be successful. However, if there is to be a strong recovery in the economy we will have to see the start of large investments, a point that Mr Jukes is strenuously making. His own company, Hill Samuel Asset Finance, is one of the leading participants in the "big ticket" sector, where deals of more than £200 million are possible if not, at present, frequent.

However, it is while wearing his FLA hat that Mr Jukes is now more vocal. He returns to the point that industry is now "bullish" but not yet in a spend mode.

"The industry has continued to grow and its place in the overall economic picture is still very important, but we are not as far on as we would have been if the growth of the 1989 era had continued. We are here, ready to play our part in the economic recovery."

Money keeps the cars moving

Leasing or hire purchase agreements finance the UK car industry from construction to driving away

VISIT any car park in Britain and count the cars. Seven out of ten will have been bought on a leasing or hire purchase agreement; and most of those will have been financed by a company or by a self-employed person able to take advantage of one of the tax-efficient packages offered by the leasing and asset finance industry.

In fact, if the leasing and asset finance industry didn't exist neither would the UK motor industry. The factories where cars are built, the production lines where they are assembled, the massive hydraulic presses which stamp out the body panels, and the elegant showrooms where they are sold are all financed by the leasing industry in some form. Even at the Arthur Daly end of the business the Rovacabin office is probably leased.

Members of the Finance and Leasing Association (FLA) have committed a large part of the £59 billion that they have invested in British industry to keep this vital element of the economy moving. John Brown heads the FLA's business motor finance committee. Last year the FLA committed £7.8 billion to finance new cars and other vehicles. This indicates the need for a separate committee.



John Brown: committed £7.8 billion last year

He says: "We are by nature optimists, and our track record shows that we can come up with the financial products that are needed to keep the sector active, but we are looking for something of a lift from the Government."

The recent VAT changes which affect leasing, and which come into play this coming autumn, have given

a boost to the industry, but packages designed to attract the business driver away from the company car towards a self-financed vehicle have largely floundered because few people are prepared to enter into new personal financial commitments.

One area which is showing signs of vitality is the commercial vehicle sector where financing of light vehicles has risen so far this year by 13 per cent and for heavy vehicles by 21 per cent. The figures have been gathered by Equifax, which carries out credit analysis for the goods vehicle market.

Tony Worthing, managing director of Equifax, says: "The substantial upturn in finance sales of new commercial vehicles — representing a significant investment by the business community — suggests growing optimism in this sector."

The used-car market is looking positive too, up slightly against a very buoyant market at this time last year. The 10.2 per cent increase year on year on the number of checks we have been asked to carry out is also an important indicator of an active market."

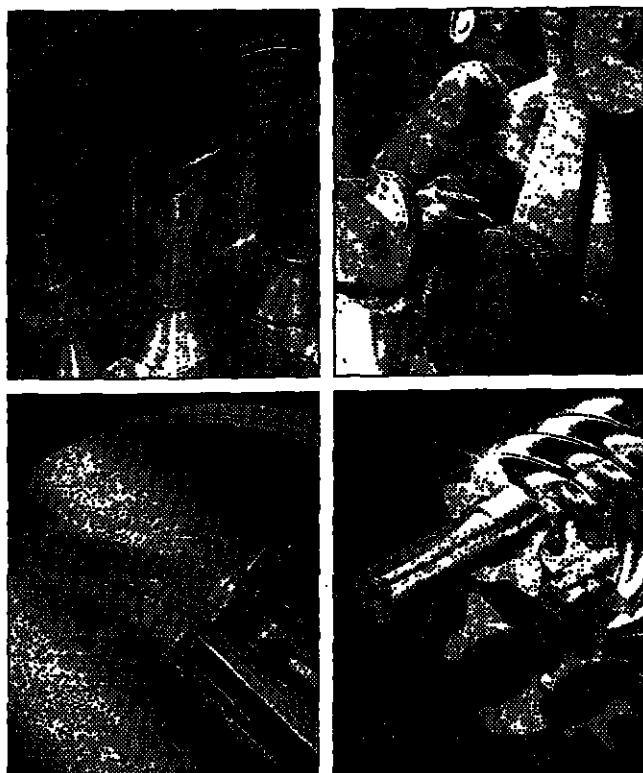
DAVID YOUNG

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The more complex the deal, the more vital the tailoring and advice, Ruth Corb writes

The case for funding

Overdrafts and loans are the bread and butter of small business finance, but can be a drain on cash flow. Leasing and asset finance, while not necessarily an alternative, should be considered as a complementary form of funding. The potential advantages are considerable.

Leasing and asset finance is a long-term proposition and of major importance, frees up vital working capital and can be particularly tax efficient.

Security is taken on the asset itself as opposed to any other form of security, which in the case of small businesses can often mean directors putting up their own homes as guarantees.

But despite the advantages, most of the players in the industry say there is considerable scope for improvement in the take-up by smaller businesses. The old image of it being little more than the hire purchase of old could be a factor. Perhaps more significantly, the love affair with overdrafts continues.

This form of finance accounts for 58 per cent of funding in the UK small business sector, according to John Callender, managing director of Barclays Mercantile, who also points out that "it is a misconception that you have to be funding an oil rig or an ocean liner to approach an asset finance company". Tony Taylor, a senior manager at Lombard Business Finance, emphasises that: "Contracts can range in value from as little as £1,000 for office equipment such as PCs and photocopiers and yet smaller businesses have still been slow to realise the benefits."

The big four clearing banks offer these services through their finance house subsidiaries: Barclays Mercantile, Lloyds Bowmaker, Lombard Business Finance (part of National Westminster) and Forward Trust (part of Midland Bank). Although as with any form of finance it is worth shopping around, as a rule of thumb the basic products and the terms and conditions on offer for manufacturing and service equipment can be quite similar and fall into a number of clear categories.

The type of asset being purchased is also often handled by separate divisions, whether it be all kinds of vehicles, plant and construction machinery, production equipment such as printing, engi-



John Callender, of Barclays Mercantile, delivering the result of a business opinion survey to No 11

neering and machine tools, or technology products. Specialisation, expertise and tailoring really come into play, the bigger and more complex the deal.

In addition, specialist manufacturers in fields which include commercial vehicles, agriculture and printing often offer their own in-house finance packages in a bid to boost sales of their goods. This can often be in the form of contract hire.

Overall, while the small business can choose from a full range of packages from fixed and variable rate funding to innovative funding schemes according to its specific needs, the products tend to be derivatives of certain basic types. These are the finance lease, the operating lease and hire purchase agreement.

Broadly they work like this: with a finance lease the company buys the use of the asset by renting it over a set period (often set for the useful life of the asset) typically,

from two to five years. At the end of the period the company is offered the majority of the sale proceeds or it can keep the asset by paying a modest annual rental. Usually a finance lease is "on balance sheet" for accounting purposes.

An operating lease can be particularly useful if the asset is limited to a specific project over a period of time shorter than the asset's anticipated working life. This is because the lessor owns the piece of equipment, takes it back at the end of the term and assumes the risk and rewards.

This also enables rental payments to be reduced because the lessor claims any capital allowances available against the asset. Initially this type of package was often only available for vehicles, but today covers a wide range of goods and equipment. An operating lease has the added attraction of being "off balance sheet" funding, which can be advantageous for larger companies wanting to con-

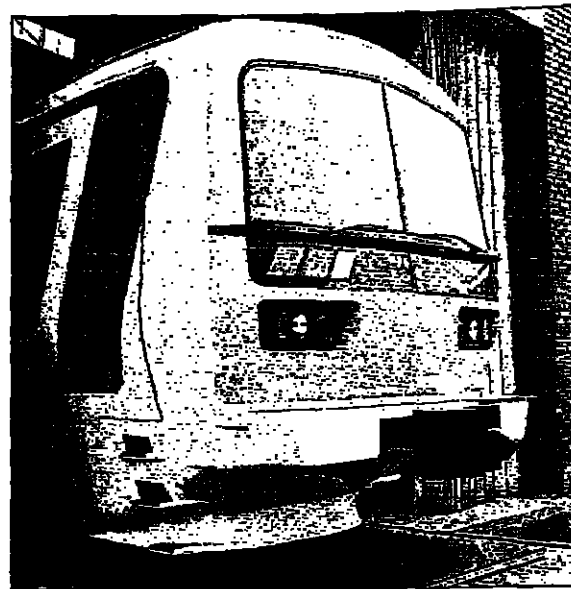
trol their balance sheets. Under a hire purchase or lease purchase agreement an asset can be bought by monthly, quarterly or even annual instalments according to cashflow requirements. It is suitable for funding long life assets and is often popular with smaller, owner-managed companies. Usually it is possible to claim the writing down allowances on the case price and offset the interest charges against taxable profits.

Even at a glance the scope, flexibility and sophistication of the packages on offer today give credence to the view expressed by John Callender that "paying cash, or arranging an overdraft to buy plant, equipment, or vehicles is just like advancing five years' wages to a new staff member on his or her first day in the job."

"Companies using working capital like this do not have the liquidity to expand and any growth will soon be strangled." Asset and lease finance could be the answer.

Call in the specialists to make the best deal

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One of the lease finance trains for Network SouthEast

LEASING and asset finance is one area where the involvement of specialist advisers is necessary if all the benefits of the financial package are to be gained by the customer and the company providing the finance.

No two deals are the same, and all of the major players have teams of highly skilled staff constantly analysing the market, tax regime and the economic outlook. However, such expertise is also available from the specialist international trade lawyers operating in London who are often able to home in on one area of trade to enable companies to develop the market.

One such company is Clifford Chance, who have fully analysed the opportunities for asset and leasing finance created by the Government's Private Finance Initiative (PFI) first announced by the Chancellor in November 1993.

According to partner Bob Charlton, at first sight leasing, and especially tax leasing, might not seem to lend itself to the requirements of the PFI. He explains that at the heart of the contemporary big ticket UK tax lease is a legal titleholder, typically a large financial institution, sharing the benefits of its capital allowances with a lessee in consideration of the lessor's basic after-tax rate of return on its expenditure. Many of these standard requirements with the twin pillars of the PFI, value-for-money and risk transfer, and issues of some considerable complexity arise.

He adds, however, that in many ways lease finance, in particular tax-based lease finance, is ideally suited to PFI projects. With its classic advantages of longer maturities and flexible drawdown and amortisation profiles, leasing can usually deliver effective borrowing costs that are lower than comparable commercial debt, thereby satisfying the value for money criterion.

He said: "Typical public sector lease finance costs will invariably still be higher than the cost of the Government raising debt finance

directly, but the PFI originates in the Government's policy of limiting, and ultimately reversing, PSBR growth — statements by the Labour Party suggest a Labour administration may well adopt a similar policy. Leasing, particularly operating leasing, also lends itself to risk transfer. With appropriate structuring, a public sector

A public sector lessee can, in principle, achieve a 'no asset, no pay' position

lessee can in principle achieve a 'no asset, no pay' position, retaining possession of the leased asset only for a particular period, and abating rentals if the asset does not perform as it should."

Mr Charlton points out that these advantages of leasing are apparent in two of the largest PFI transactions to date. In the Networker Transaction, completed in January last year, British

Rail lease-financed, through a consortium of the subsidiaries of the clearing banks, a fleet of new commuter trains for Network SouthEast, but with maintenance remaining the responsibility of the manufacturer, who also took on the role of a residual value guarantor in the event that BR exercised a walk-away right.

In the second main deal, the Northern Line Transaction, London Underground entered into a contract with the manufacturer to provide an entire fleet of new trains, with the manufacturer taking the risk of non-performance both in the build period and after acceptance, and financing the construction of the trains via a UK tax lease. In many ways these deals illustrate the degree of innovation that the leasing industry is prepared to develop, and it is likely they will provide the framework of further large deals for developments in the public sector.

Mr Charlton said: "Very much to the fore in future transactions will be the extent to which lessors are willing to take some risk of tax adjustments arising as a result of a future change of law, and this would simply be following their counterparts elsewhere in Europe, where such arrangements are common. More problematic is developing a lessor appetite for sharing asset performance risks or risks relating to revenues generated by the leased assets. While lease financing is obviously well suited to large infrastructure projects, there is, in principle, no reason why it should not be equally useful in smaller scale projects. There are considerable opportunities in the information technology area: an example is the deal between the Inland Revenue and EDS, under which EDS has taken a significant facilities management role. Also clearly within the scope of PFI are smaller, middle ticket, equipment leasing deals, particularly in the health sector."

DAVID YOUNG

Firms go back to the future

Clear evidence is emerging that while most companies are still waiting to "feel good", they are preparing to shrug off any air of pessimism and are planning to invest in major new assets within the next three months. In most cases by using lease finance packages.

A survey by Lombard Business Finance has found that although only one in ten companies was confident the economy is about to experience an upturn, 70 per cent are prepared to make a major investment decision. Lombard surveys in the past have been accurate as far as investment intentions are concerned to within 3 per cent.

The survey, carried out during March and April and involving 450 finance direc-

prove the quality of life for their staff and 32 per cent will improve working conditions. A third hoped to take on more staff, two-thirds would maintain staffing levels and only 3 per cent said they expected to have to make staff cuts.

DAVID YOUNG



Paul Gee: "Boom can wait"

tors, found that 44 per cent of companies blame the Government for the current air of pessimism. Paul Gee, marketing director of Lombard Business Finance, said: "British businesses are doing it for themselves — they are not waiting for the next national boom. Companies are now investing in their own futures."

The survey shows that only one in five companies feels that recent interest rate rises have had a negative effect on plans to invest. Nearly half feel that the rises have dented confidence in the economy as a whole, but not necessarily their own business confidence.

An interesting aspect of the planned investment is that most companies say they will be made to improve efficiency and improve conditions for their staff. Efficiency improvements are being targeted by 70 per cent of the companies involved. 37 per cent say their planned acquisitions will im-

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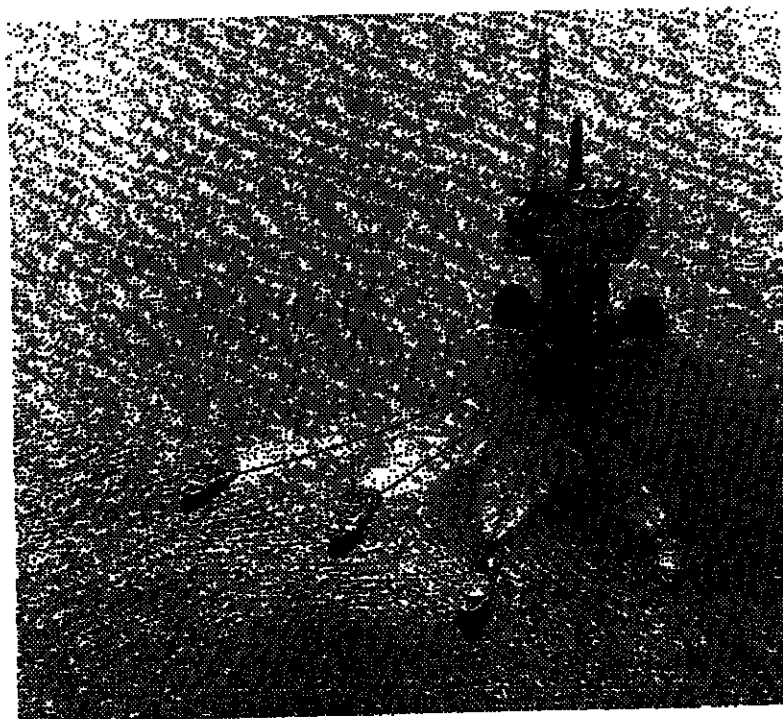


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Net	61.51	+ 0.09	2.1%	New Europe	183.70	195.80	+ 2.350	1.6%	P/E 07
Acquis.	59.80	+ 0.11	1.8%	Acquis. Units	103.40	102.00	+ 0.450	1.3%	
Transfer (C)	22.50	+ 0.10	1.9%	Pacific	114.80	122.40	+ 0.700	3.3%	

ACCUM. NATIONAL	63.74	67.45	- 0.086	3.86
Portolio	81.23	86.21	- 0.16	2.68
ACCUM. UNITS	96.96	72.80	- 0.10	2.58

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(continued)

هكذا من الأسفل



POP 1

An eagerly awaited new release from the giants of rock: Pink Floyd talk about their lives and their shows



POP 2

The South Carolina quartet Hootie & The Blowfish play driving rock'n'roll to a rapturous London audience

THE TIMES ARTS



POP 3

Exhausting but tolerable: East 17, the boys from Walthamstow, are loud and clear in their Wembley gig



JAZZ

A slowly building musical argument from saxman and composer Tommy Smith in his fine Blackheath concert

Life in the old dinosaur yet

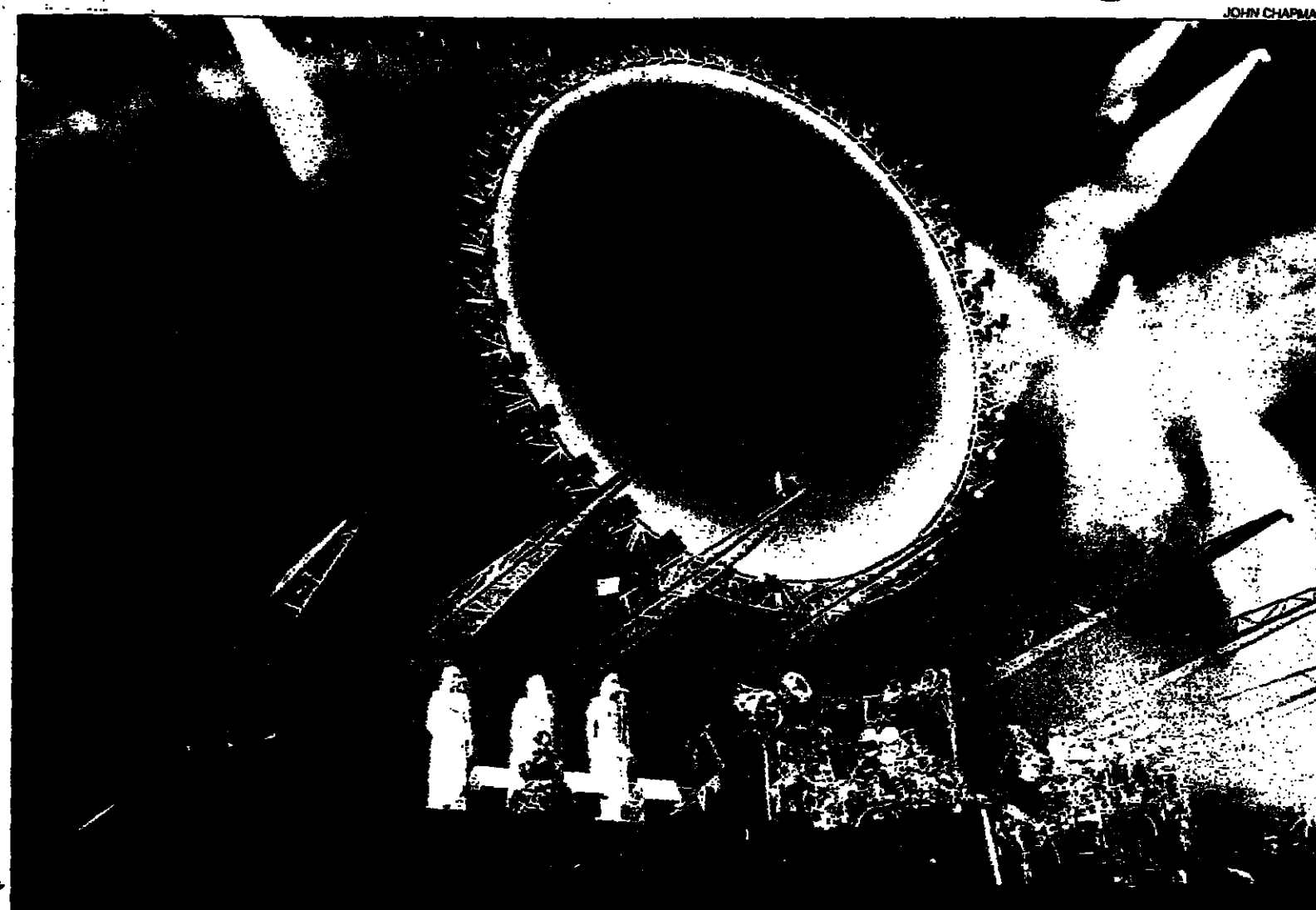
With a new live album, Pink Floyd feel their spectacular world tour let them prove their worth, not least to themselves, they tell David Sinclair

Last October, Pink Floyd finally came unstuck. After years of sending mock aeroplanes and flying beds crashing into their stages, of routinely suspending quadraphonic sound systems, huge inflatable pigs and the world's biggest disco ball above their audiences' heads, of erecting and demolishing fake walls, of deploying arsenals of lasers and exploding pyrotechnics, of operating massive electrical sound systems and lighting rigs in rain-lashed stadiums and fields... after all that it took just one accident to mar the group's previously unblemished record for safety.

Although the incident at London's Earls Court, when a crowded stand of seats collapsed, was widely reported, the group declined to comment publicly at the time, beyond an official statement expressing their dismay. An official investigation into the cause of the accident was launched, although seven months later it has yet to reveal its findings. Now, with the release this week of *P.U.L.S.E.*, a live double-disc album, and next week of a live video of the Earls Court concert, the band have broken their silence.

"It was terrifying," says guitarist and singer David Gilmour, recalling the moment when he realised what had happened at Earls Court, the only indoor arena on last year's *The Division Bell* world tour. "It was extremely lucky that nobody was killed. I was, and am, extremely angry about it."

"Obviously, the responsibility comes back to us at some point, but in reality, in an operation like Pink Floyd, you cannot take care, yourself, of every single aspect." The fact is that Pink Floyd's stage show continues to rank among the wonders of the entertainment world. "We try quite hard, and we take a lot of care, and we don't cut corners," Gilmour says. "But I'm not really a perfectionist. The idea is to make a good and exciting show. Working too hard towards perfection tends to bring about sterility."



The light fantastic at Earls Court, 1994: Pink Floyd's elaborate stage show has always been one of the wonders of the entertainment world

Gilmour agrees. "Brain Damage and Eclipse were the only two tracks which Roger sang on the record. I've read lots of reviews saying I don't sing Money as well as Roger did. But I sang it in the first place. Roger sang more later on, on *The Wall*. One doesn't like to harp on about it, but I'm much more of a musician and a melodicist and Roger was much more of a lyricist and a driving force."

Whatever the division of labour, 30 years after the group was founded, Pink Floyd are now a bigger institution than ever before. And despite their shadowy presence as performers and their best efforts to avoid the limelight, the individual members have finally acquired a low-key celebrity. Mason's recent purchase of Camilla Parker Bowles's house earned him a place in several unwanted news stories.

Both Gilmour and Mason were listed in the recent *Sunday Times* survey of Britain's Richest 500 (Mason was ranked 289th with a fortune estimated at £40 million; Gilmour came in at No 346 with £35 million, both some



Still in the Pink: (from left to right) David Gilmour, Rick Wright and Nick Mason

distance ahead of Rod Stewart). The subject prompts snorts of irritation and derision from both men. "Wildly inaccurate," says Gilmour, folding his arms emphatically. "Inevitably, as aristocrats of the rock world, they have been sucked in to the trappings of the glitterati. 'You can't live in

and around London and have some amount of fame and wealth without being peered at as some kind of celebrity, which I've never found comfortable. I'm just a humble musician."

The group have no immediate plans to do another album or tour. Mason is writing a book about Pink Floyd to be published by Virgin later this year and Wright has embarked on a solo album, which he has written with lyricist Anthony Moore and is recording at his own studio in the South of France.

"This was not a farewell tour," Mason says. "What I've been to avoid this time, if possible, is the kind of cycle that goes with being a dinosaur act: record for a year, tour for a year, do nothing for three years. I think there are other shows that could be done by Pink Floyd, but not of such magnitude. Something like a laser-only show, indoors, perhaps."

"I know that on the last tour, there were times when we felt that maybe the show was taking over from the music. But we're not going to suddenly head for the clubs. It would be absurd for us not to put on a great show, since that is what we like doing and what we're good at."

● The live double-album, *P.U.L.S.E.* (EMI EMD 1078) is released today

● The live video, *P.U.L.S.E.* 20.10.94 (PML PM805) is released on June 5

Hootie & The Blowfish, Empire, W12

The Blowfish, then, are a case study in how to kick against the system just by being true to your own music. In their instance a driving, rootsy rock'n'roll steered by the throaty lead vocals of Darius Rucker and the guitar frameworks of Mark Bryan.

The band reached into their indie past for a song from 1993's self-financed *Koochy-pop EP* and found that they had a bunch of singalong favourites on their hands with the current American hit *Let Her Cry*, the next single *Only Wanna Be With You* and the now anthemic *Hold My Hand*.

And, perhaps recalling the days when bar audiences had less time for unproven material, they then turned themselves back into a highly polished covers band for Bill Withers's *Use Me* and a convincing *Ziggy Stardust*, for which the crowd roared and roared as if it were by Bowie himself. But Hootie & The Blowfish are not standing in for anyone any longer.

PAUL SEXTON

Peter Barnard's radio review in *The Times* last week (Thursday, May 25) referred to *Face the Facts*. In fact the programme he was discussing was *File on Four*.

All you need is lungs



East 17: marrying Euro disco with snatched soul lines

As the resigned faces of the parents waiting in Wembley's car park suggested, there is nothing quite like the sound of 10,000 prepubescent throats in full voice. It is a high-decibel whistle that soars through the ears, makes buildings throb and promises imminent structural damage.

East 17 have chalked up ten hit singles since first bouncing onto pop's stage three years ago. The Walthamstow quartet are presumably insured to the effect that their hybrid dance music and gyrating pelvises have on underage females. For those of more advanced years, the sight of fans and idols playing out their parts is always arresting.

East 17 Wembley Arena

If modern-day pop hysteria presents any enduring image, it is not such screaming, sobbing girls waving laboriously linked placards carrying messages of libidinal intent. Nor the soft toys which were hurled, with all the forceful accuracy of international-level rugby passes, towards East 17 moments after they had absented onto the stage. Rather, it is the recognition that technological theatrics now work at such a sophisticated level as to engender desire in the most disparate way. When girls faint at the sight of a rising camera boom, something major is happening.

Luckily, for rapper Tony Mortimer and singer Brian Harvey, most of the audience maintained enough composure to stare, blown up on giant video screens for slower numbers such as *Deep* and *Slow it Down*.

For all the hype, East 17 actually have a canny approach to songwriting. Utilising the beats of Euro disco with house music's snatched soul lines and wedding the result to a moody, old-style rapping technique, the band have achieved credibility that extends beyond the confines of their adolescent market. This promises longevity, even if, for the present, East 17 make only for an exhausting, but tolerable, experience.

LOUISE GRAY

Under Milk Wood
by Dylan Thomas
A world of real humour and delight
"WONDROUS... TRIUMPHANT"

The captain keeps the score

ALTHOUGH he is just 28, saxophonist/composer Tommy Smith made his first recording 12 years ago and has already experienced enough of the vicissitudes of the jazz life to qualify as a veteran.

Certainly, his new suite for sextet, *Misty Morning and No Time*, inspired by the poetry of the Scot Norman MacCaig, bears all the hallmarks of an artist's mature work. Considered, packed with felicitous complexity, it employs a startling variety of musical textures to convey the range of MacCaig's poetic concerns.

To his rhythmic section of Norwegian bassist Terje Gewelt and Canadian drummer Ian Froman, Smith has added Scottish pianist Steve Hamilton and augmented the front line with trumpeter Guy Barker and fellow saxophonist Julian Argüelles. They played Smith's suite — all 14 pieces —

JAZZ Tommy Smith Sextet Blackheath Concert Halls

recital-fashion at this Blackheath concert. Smith likens his musical approach to that of a writer, organised, tidy, logically progressing from statement to statement, slowly building an argument. His suite betrays this passion for order — four pieces, indeed, are wholly composed — but Smith draws on everything from Scottish folk music through Prokofiev and Satie to the blues and Wynton Marsalis-like swing to echo the many moods of MacCaig's work.

and formality, however, it is seriously misleading, for the complementary soloing skills of the three front-line players were a delight throughout. Barker alternately fired off quicksilver trumpet runs and sweetly plangent, mellow comments on moquette (a trumpet/flugelhorn hybrid); Argüelles's alto solos seemed to bubble up within him, breathy sound sculptures occasionally tinged with an attractive querulousness; Smith himself leavened his basic Coltrane-ish skirling muscularity with a keening earnestness and a romantic lyricism reminiscent of Charles Lloyd or Jan Garbarek.

Jazz-based freedom was thus accommodated, without a hint of contrivance, within classical structure — a rare and pleasing achievement.

CHRIS PARKER

VERDI FESTIVAL
Edward Downes conducts
STIFFELLO
with Catherine Malfitano and Jose Cura

Rockers to the roots

DAYS before this South Carolina quartet hit town, they reached the crest of a relentless wave when their *Cracked Rear View* album reached No 1 in America, 44 weeks after making its first timid showing last summer.

Such slow-burning success, you would think, could only come in the United States, where every road mile has paid them back with more inquiring ears and open wallets. What chance for this gimmickless bunch of rockers in the British market?

Every chance, if a rapturous Empire audience is the gauge. Hootie & The Blowfish were greeted as conquering sons, almost every song exuberantly embraced by word-perfect fans. The album was released here in March, debuted at an impressive No 12 and only fell from the chart last week after nine weeks of unassumingly winning converts.

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EUROPE
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across the Singapore

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for the Book (1948) 208
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TONIGHT
Playwright David Edgar explores art and nationalism in Eastern Europe in *Pentecost*, arriving at the Young Vic



TONIGHT
Mozart and Mahler on the menu as Valery Gergiev leads the Royal Philharmonic on the South Bank

THE TIMES ARTS



OPERA
A joy for the ears as the French tenor Roberto Alagna gives a bravura performance in *La Bohème*



MUSIC
Mariss Jansons conducts Brahms for the BBC Welsh: not the most convincing proof of his talents

LONDON

PENTECOST: In the opinion of many, the best play of 1994. David Edgar explores the conflicting claims of art and nationalism, tourism and the needs of the poor, set in an abandoned church in Eastern Europe. Michael Attenborough directs the RSC production at the Young Vic, London. (0171-938 8833). Preview tonight, 7.15pm, opens June 6.

THE BROKEN HEART: Excellent, clear staging by Michael Boyd of Ford's murky melodrama of revenge. Emma Fielding, John Glen, Philip Voss are outstanding at the cost of the terrace. P.R. Barrow, EC2 (0171-638 8811). Preview tonight, 7.15pm, opens June 6.

GEROME RETURNS: The Royal's music director Valery Gergiev leads the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra again for another in the Mahler/Symphony No. 8 series. Tonight's programme is devoted to Mahler's Symphony No. 4 and Mahler's Symphony No. 8. Festival Hall, South Bank, SE1 (0171-938 8800). Tonight, 7.30pm.

MADEIRA MITSCHKE: Tonight's revival from the acclaimed world premiere includes London premieres of John Wood's... This is a night and James Macdonald's *King of Wood* and a world premiere for Ivan Havel's *Dialogue* and

ABSOLUTE HELL: Rodney Arden's portrait of a brilliant performer in the summer of 1945 as a fascinating recovery, played by a top-class cast headed by John Durrant and Gary Haver. National (0171-938 8800). Tonight, 7.30pm, opens June 6.

AMPHITRYON: Aesop's elegant and tragicomic version of the classic about divine mockery in the marriage bed. Directed by David McLellan. Galle, 11 Pentecost Rd, W11 (0171-259 0706). Preview tonight and tomorrow, opens Fri, at 7.30pm.

ANGEL AND CLOUTIER: Vanessa Redgrave directs and plays the serpent, and Paul Butler... *Shylock* and the best thing in Peter Selous' recent *Merchant*... at the end of the last production of the Moving Theatre season.

DESIGN FOR LIVING: Rachel Weisz, Rupert Graves and Marcus D'Amico in *Design for Living*, a modern comedy. South Bank, SE1 (0171-938 8800). Mon-Sat, 8pm, opens June 6.

THE DUCHESSE OF MALFI: Juliet Stevenson and Simon Russell Beaudry in Webster's tragedy of incest, murder and the borderland of the mind. Wyndham, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-369 1748). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, opens June 6.

ANGELS: A squad of angels help a baseball team. Unabashedly sentimental family film, with Danny Glover and Christopher Lloyd. Wilton Dean directs. MGM Tricorder (0171-434 0331).

EYE LOVE LOVE: Three devoted clowns spend a tedious weekend with their kids. Facile comedy for male baby boomers, with Matthew Modine, Paul Reiser and Randy Quaid. Director, Sam Weisman. Orion Screenplay (0171-434 0331).

ED WOOD: Tim Burton's wonderful biography of the bizarre man who made the world's worst film, *Plan 9 from Outer Space*. With Johnny Depp, and Martin Landau as Bela Lugosi. Clapham Picture House (0171-434 0331).

AS FAST AS MY FOOT: Cauchy and his merry gang on an English boarding school. With Freddie Jones and Christopher Lee. Director, Justin Hardy. MGM Tricorder (0171-434 0331).

THE MANGLER: Lame and silly horror film from a Stephen King story about a bloodthirsty laundry machine. With Robert Englund. Director, Bob Wizer. MGM Tricorder (0171-434 0331).

BLOSSOM DEARIE: 16 May - 3 June 1995. Residency Band, B&K and David. 11 Pentecost Rd, W11 (0171-259 0706).

ART GALLERIES
GEORGE HOPPER 1910-1944. Last 3 days. Pinner Gallery, 11 Pentecost Rd, London SW1. Tel 0171 259 814.

CABARET
THE GREEN ROOM. In the City. London's premier cabaret and nightclub. Tel 0171 434 0331.

PERA & BALLET
CLAUSSON 0171 632 8800 (0171-938 8800). National Opera, 11 Pentecost Rd, London SW1. Tel 0171 259 814.

THEATRES
ADELPHI
"ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER'S MASTERCLASS". Tel 0171 344 4444.

SUNSET BOULEVARD
ELIANE BROWN and JOHN BROWNE. 24th Street. Tel 0171 344 4444.

ALBANY
"THE JOINT". Tel 0171 344 4444.

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TODAY'S EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Kris Anderson

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BIRMINGHAM: Roger Allan and Philip...

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THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

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OPERA: A Bohemian star returns to Covent Garden, while British performers flock to Bavaria

Putting punch in Puccini

The Royal Opera claims to have "refurbished" *Bohème*, for its final revival of the season. It needed attention after the miserably gloom performances earlier in the year. A bit more light shines in the last act and Marcello's nude model now makes a very decorous effort to find her clothes.

LONDON GALLERIES
British Museum European Applied Arts Galleries (0171-638 1525).

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Simple, sombre Simon

Simon Boccanegra

Nationaltheater, Munich

It is all very serious. Hildegarde Bechtler's sets are abstract, painterly and vaguely ship-like shapes in muted colours. The sea, albeit frozen, is omnipresent. Nicky Gillbrand's timeless, equally subdued costumes carry hints of Garibaldi and Mussolini, but in the most discreet fashion.

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Symphony Hall, Birmingham

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Too lively to come alive

Simon Boccanegra

Nationaltheater, Munich

off the special qualities of the BBC NOW, whose violins sounded ugly when roused and whose woodwinds were far from perfectly blended in intonation. Nor was it the most convincing demonstration of the interpretative genius of Mariss Jansons, who clearly enjoyed his lyrical aspects but did little to motivate its structural development.

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Putting punch in Puccini

La Bohème

Covent Garden

probably is that Puccini is dealing in affairs that end in grief. That latter feeling fills Haymon's *Mimi*. She milks *Mi chiamano Mimi* for all the sentimentality going, which is quite a lot, before almost disappearing from sight in the Café Momus crowd. Her soprano, sweet and softly controlled, pays dividends in the last two acts when death is just around the corner.

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Mariss Jansons conducts Brahms for the BBC Welsh not the most convincing proof of his talents

flock to Bavaria



Lu Baker

PROFILE

What drives Sir Peter Hall? A new biography lifts the lid on Britain's extraordinary man of the theatre



VISUAL ART

A London showing for the Argentine painter Guillermo Kuitca, whose work explores both horror and beauty



THE TIMES ARTS



DANCE

British export: Paul Lightfoot is young, he's British, he's talented. And he makes his ballets for Holland

THEATRE

A plea for pacifism from the German Wolfgang Borchert, whose 1947 play, *Out In the Cold*, is on in Greenwich



Inside the Hall of fame

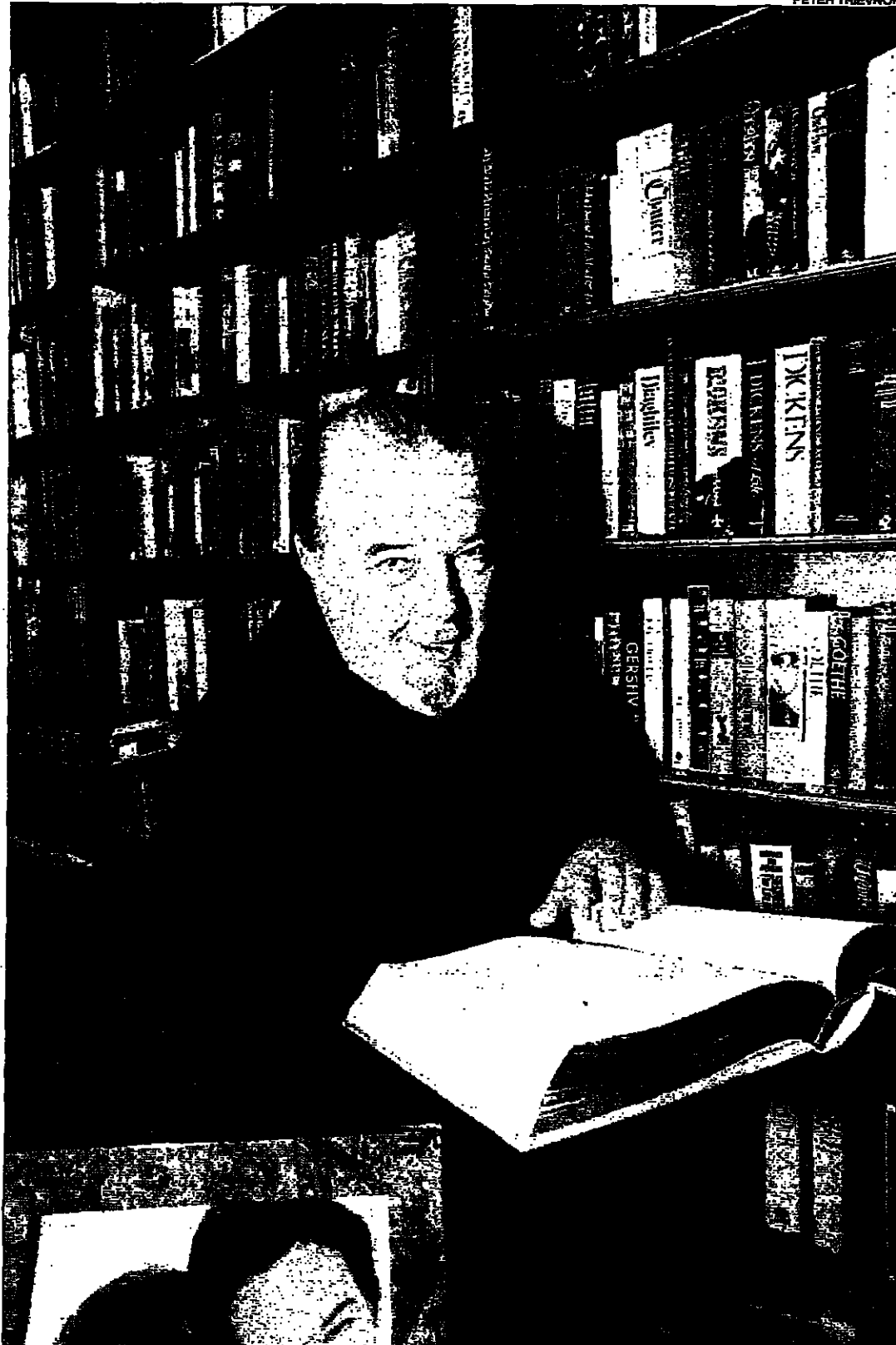
Benedict Nightingale assesses a new biography of theatrical giant, Sir Peter Hall

If Sir Peter Hall had not been so ambitious, dedicated and ruthless, Britain would have had either a Royal Shakespeare Company or a National Theatre on the South Bank, but it would not have had both. That is the conclusion Stephen Fay reaches at the end of *Power Play*, his biography of the director, producer, workaholic and affable Machiavelli. I would add "artistically able and creative" or something to his list of defining adjectives, for Hall is also the man who introduced Beckett to Britain, established Pinter as a major dramatist, brought a freshness to Mozart opera and continues to steer the good ship Shakespeare between traditionalist Scylla and trendy Charybdis. But Fay's claim is surely justified.

What drives Hall, and why has not a grateful nation rewarded that drive more fully? The second question is more easily answered than the first. As National supremo in the fiscally tricky 1980s, he managed to upset just about everyone, not least the Prime Minister himself. If she was irked when Mozart was portrayed as a sociological child in Hall's production of *Amadeus*, she was outraged by his attacks on what he saw as Tory parsimony and philistinism, asking her then Arts Minister, "When can we stop giving money to awful people like Peter Hall?" I suspect that this is why he has yet to be awarded the peerage that would give the theatre, one of our most enterprising, successful and internationally envied industries, an effective spokesman in the Lords.

If that is the explanation, it is a bit grudging and out-of-date, for he is now as active in the West End marketplace as he was in his Stratford and South Bank redoubts. Not long ago he had five shows, all directed by himself, running simultaneously on Shaftesbury Avenue. That is a record matched in the 1990s only by the composer of *Cats* and *Starlight Express*. "Look at Andrew Lloyd Webber," Baroness Thatcher once said, by way of reproaching him for his enthusiasm for subsidy. Well, look at Hall.

Fay's biography confirms what Hall's own autobiography suggested in 1993, that behind the smiling public mask there has often been a pretty drawn face. The words that the director's third wife, Maria



Sir Peter Hall outraged Baroness Thatcher with his attacks on what he saw as Tory philistinism

Ewing, uses of him would stun those who have been out-maneuvred by him in the committee room. She remembers him as over-emotional, delicate, vulnerable, self-doubting, badly in need of reassurance, and sometimes suicidally depressed. Those who know both former partners might feel that this is a bit like an aircraft carrier accusing a battleship of softness. Nevertheless, Hall's inner turmoil did cause one doctor to suggest electric shock treatment and another to ask if it was wise to keep so many sleeping pills beside his bed.

As far as I know, Hall has never undergone psychoanalysis, but were he to do so, he would presumably talk rather a lot about the mother he once confessed to having hated. His father, a gentle, kindly East Anglian railwayman, clearly gave him stability and confidence. But his mother was a frustrated, angry, ambitious person. She once told her son that he was an only child "because she couldn't do it for two properly", and

she seems simultaneously to have pushed, criticised and mollycoddled him. When he was first working in London, she would actually make special journeys to Liverpool Street to give him his clean laundry and take back his dirty socks and shirts.

What does that sort of single-minded attention do to a boy with a fine mind, a touchiness about his working-class origins, and what one doctor said was an inbuilt tendency to manufacture too much adrenalin? It wrecks or it toughens or it does both at once. It creates the desperate desire to keep proving himself that Hall has admitted has ruled much of his life. It forges the sort of person who takes over the summer stock at Stratford at the age of 27, rapidly transforms it into the RSC, and, when crisis inevitably comes, admits to feeling "like a child who doesn't want to take an

When can we stop giving money to awful people like Peter Hall?

exam because he fears he will fail". But Fay is less concerned with analysing such "neurosis", as he calls it, than in describing the professional struggles and achievements that may and may not be its results. This is the right book if you want to know about the conflicts of Hall's RSC and Olivier's National when it looked as if the latter might take over the former, or between Hall's National and post-Hall Stratford when a merger was again briefly mooted. These are odd, convoluted stories which sometimes leave Hall looking a bit slippery and inconsistent; yet it was he, above all, who ensured that we now have two national companies rather than a steel-and-concrete octopus with a bloated body in London and half a tentacle in Warwickshire.

Fay's feelings about his subject seem to be a mix of admiration, alarm and bafflement. There is a lot in his book about Hall's enthusiasm for empire, but also a lot to show that he has used power well. His first wife, Leslie Caron, thought of him as an English Richelieu; his present one, Nicki Frei, as a natural outsider who feels ill at ease at the top of his profession; and both are probably right.

If this is neurosis, the British theatre could use more of it.

Power Play, The Life and Times of Peter Hall is published by Hodder & Stoughton (£20)

Mapping the mind's journey

VISUAL ART: Charlotte Mullins reviews the first major British show by one of Argentina's leading contemporary artists

At the far end of the lower gallery at the Whitechapel, a huge canvas pulsates with fragile colour. A map is discernible, the streets criss-crossing densely. *Untitled* (1992) is a plan of a town, but which town is unclear, because none of the roads or districts is named. The town seems to have grown rapidly, as pieces of canvas have been tacked on around the edges to accommodate the delineation of yet more anonymous streets.

Yet the work appears somehow strange. The roads often end in tangles, and in parts they have been obliterated by patchy grey pigment. But stranger still is their composition, because the entire surface is covered in hypodermic syringes, which form the outlines of the streets. It is as if they have injected the canvas with something morbid, and the map has become a complex labyrinth from which there can be no escape.

Guillermo Kuitca's canvases resonate with dualities. From his early figurative works to his later paintings of maps and stadium plans, the Argentine painter (who was born in 1961) has explored the boundaries between location and dislocation, security and surveillance, horror and beauty — always centring on a handful of leitmotifs such as the empty bed and chair, and the house-plan and the map.

Kuitca first used the empty bed in his paintings in 1982, the year which marks the start of this survey, entitled *Burning Beds* and spanning 12 years. He describes the bed as our first territory; consequently, he says, "the bed for me is the first map we have".

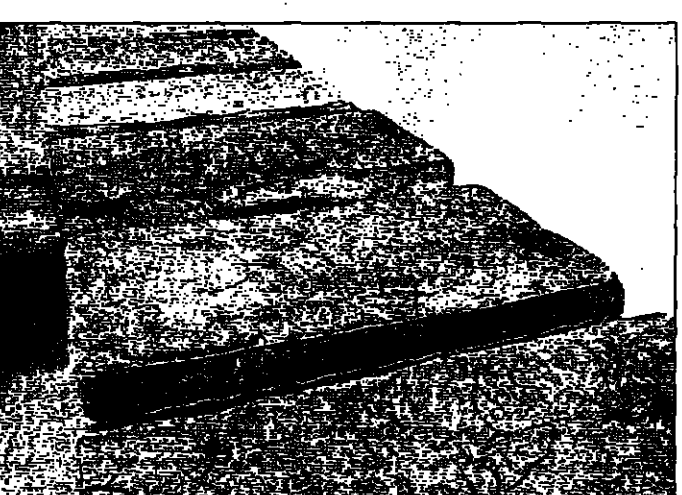
In 1987 Kuitca began mapping fragments of countries directly onto

mattresses. He says, "it was very important to find a way to put these two strands together, the close and personal — the bed — with the impersonal and far, which is a map: the two things together for me signify human experience."

In the upstairs gallery, a double row of beds, the size of a child's first bed, extends the length of the gallery. The patterns of teddy bears and flowers that decorate the mattresses have been stained and smeared with grey paint, to which Kuitca has added fragments of arbitrarily chosen maps. The installation suggests that the location of your first bed remains with you throughout life, soaked with memories: a fitting reminder, perhaps, of Argentine culture, where over 90 per cent of the population have immigrant European ancestry.

In *Coming*, 1989, Kuitca fuses previous motifs such as the bed and chair, the map, the plan into a series of 12 paintings within a painting. The grey painted frame that divides each section is transgressed by elements such as the spotlight on the empty chair in one corner, whose milky light illuminates the apartment plan below. Semen-like stains drip down over the bed, the corner of the sheets turned back expectantly. Yet as in all of Kuitca's later work, no one comes. The canvas is devoid of life, but the human presence is constantly evoked by the use of quotidian objects. *Coming* is a concentration of Kuitca's ideas, a summing up of his Eighties work, and a starting point for the future.

Guillermo Kuitca is at the Whitechapel Gallery, London E1, (0171-522 7888) until June 25



Public and private worlds meet: part of Guillermo Kuitca's installation of 60 mattresses at the Whitechapel Art Gallery

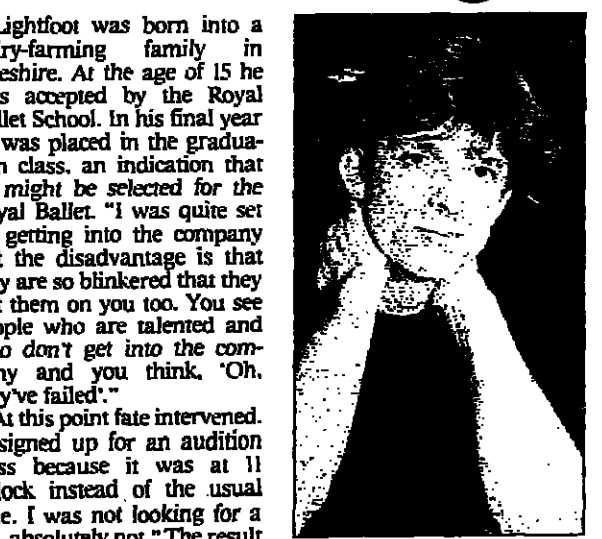
DANCE: Edward Thorpe welcomes a British choreographer who found recognition abroad

He is 6ft 2in tall and handsome in a romantic way, with large eyes and floppy dark hair à la Hugh Grant. He is a powerful, charismatic dancer and, although only 28, has a rising reputation achieved through no fewer than 30 to 40 ballets already produced. His name, appropriately, is Paul Lightfoot.

He was trained at the Royal Ballet School, so why is he dancing and choreographing with the Netherlands Dance Theatre and not the Royal Ballet? Partly because fate determined otherwise, and partly because the powers that be failed to see what creative potential he possessed.

London now has a chance to see Lightfoot's work, both as a dancer and choreographer. He is leading the 10 Dancers Ensemble, drawn from the Netherlands Dance Theatre, at Sadler's Wells Theatre this week. The programme includes two of his works, *Sh-Boom*, and *Sigue*, on which he worked closely with his girlfriend, the Spanish-born dancer Sol Leon. Two weeks later NDT2 arrives at the same theatre with programmes that include another Lightfoot work, *Solitaire*.

One that got away



Lightfoot: "a good omen"

about NDT, thinking it was a classical company. But the instant he walked into the NDT studios in The Hague, he felt stimulated, not least because there, on the wall, was a big picture of a ballet, *Symphony of Psalms*, which he had only seen on television

but which had made an enormous impression on him: he did not know it was by Kytlian. "I thought, this is a good omen."

A good omen indeed. The eight weeks were extended into three months until Dame Merle insisted he return for the annual RBS performance at Covent Garden. "The moment I came back, I realised it wasn't my home. I had changed and nobody gave me any cause to think I might do anything I would be proud of. What NDT was doing was so creative. Fate gave me a really good exit into something creative."

Lightfoot spent two and a half years with NDT before moving into the main company, NDT1. He was encouraged by Kytlian to choreograph, starting with workshop pieces, followed by a first commission for NDT2 based, ambitiously, on the life of Shakespeare. His second work for the company, *Step Lively*, was a big success.

His choreographic style is eclectic, although rarely ab-

stract. "When you've been in NDT," he says, "you learn the art of being creative with your physical side. But I like to have a theme in my head, however bizarre or unintelligible. I always have to have a reason for a work even if it is basically movement-orientated."

His choice of music is also eclectic, ranging from Baroque to pop, but he has a particular affinity — doubtless from his father's choral work and his granny singing hymns about the house — with vocal scores. The music for *Step Lively*, for instance, is a Bulgarian female choir.

Lightfoot has made successful works for all three NDT companies (NDT3 employs dancers over 40). Last year he choreographed no fewer than nine works.

And the future? Might he find himself directing one of the NDT companies some day? "I don't know what the plan is for the future," he says, "but I want to continue dancing and choreographing. I try not to think about the future too much."

10 Dancers Ensemble is at Sadler's Wells Theatre until Saturday. NDT2 is at the same theatre from June 19-July 1. Box Office: 0171-713 6000.

THE German writer Wolfgang Borchert was a devastated war veteran when he died at 26. Bedridden in hospital by 1946, writing prolifically, he knew he had less than a year to live. His life ended in 1947, the day before the Hamburg premiere of his vehemently pacifist play.

Out In the Cold, newly translated by Julian Forsyth, is a disturbed expressionistic dream-play. It blurs the life and dying visions of Beckmann, a crippled, penniless ex-Corporal. Having come home to an unfaithful wife and still haunted by ghosts,

Beckmann is drowning himself, seemingly repeatedly, in the River Elbe.

Past, present and possible futures overlap. Beyond that, his story is framed in a macabre comedy routine by another psychologically-damaged soldier who, mirrored by Beckmann within the main action, recounts his nightmares of yet more young men who fell, telling their tragedy like a cabaret gag.

Borchert's characters clear-

ly, sometimes too clearly, voice the author's personal condemnation of German militarism. Beckmann, in imagination or in actuality, gains access to the home of his former Colonel (Donald Francke, jovial yet dismissive) where Beckmann faces him with a long speech on the latter's responsibility for soldiers' deaths.

Meanwhile, the play's jerky episodes, penned in eight days, are muddled. The joint directors Margaret and Julian Forsyth have fun with the personified River Elbe (Imogen Bain), a humungous fishwife in suspenders, who gives Beckmann an earful and throws him back on shore. But the allegorical personifica-

THEATRE

Out In The Cold Greenwich Studio

THE TIMES

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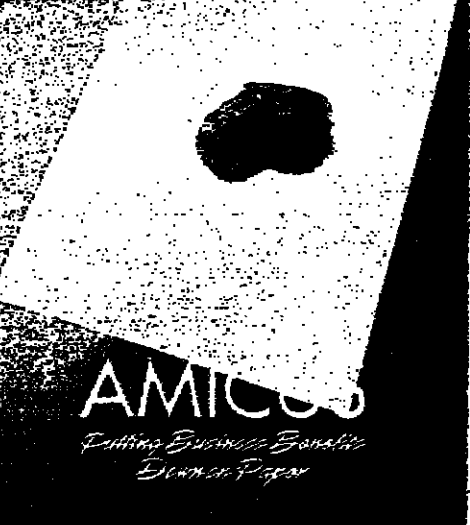
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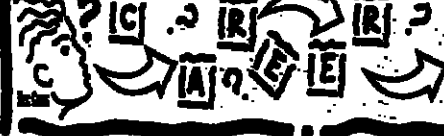
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There are still managers who need encouragement to recognise and promote the skills of their assistants. Beryl Dixon reports

Hidden talents in the photocopier queue

This is not one of those articles telling you how to move out of the secretarial role. It is for readers who are quite happy to be secretaries and see the job as a profession in its own right - but have not yet been able to develop their own job into that of a true executive assistant.

Do you feel under-used and under-valued? Are there tasks in your company which you know perfectly well you are capable of doing? In ideal manager-secretary relationships, work should be shared. Good bosses delegate and expect PAs to work unsupervised. If you are trapped in a job with a boss who simply will not use your expertise properly what can you do about it?

It is helpful first to analyse the reasons. He or she might never have employed anyone with your level of competence. Some bosses are unwilling to delegate. They suffer from the "it's quicker to do it myself" and "I haven't time to sit down and show someone else how to do this" or "I'm a manager. Everything is my responsibility" syndrome. Others simply may not know how to delegate. A small

number are afraid to offload work. If you can do it as well as they can, are you after their job?

There are useful tactics - and you will require a degree of assertiveness (as opposed to aggressiveness) in adopting them. Assess what you could take over. Could you start with something like reading the financial press, tracking companies' progress and preparing summaries - later to develop into much more in-depth research? What about taking over some monthly reports?

When you have worked out what you would like to do, how do you get your manager to agree? First, make an appointment to see him or her. You keep the diary after all. Before you do so, you might find it useful to read a book by Debra Alcock, of the Industrial Society, who frequently runs career development courses. Working with a Secretary (ES98), is intended to show managers how to use secretaries effectively. You can pick up some good ideas here.

When you hold that meeting, take care over the phrases you use. "We really do need to talk. I have some things I would like to discuss with you." "I would value the opportunity to do... and I have a list here", are useful, assertive phrases. They make your meaning quite clear - and make it difficult for anyone to fob you off unheard.

Ms Alcock has some tips. "The trick is to make it clear that you are trying to help your manager. Prepare something. For example, write a report, take it in with you and say: 'I know how time-consuming this is for you to do every month and I think I could handle it.' Your manager's time is precious. You want to save it."

You might find it easier and more helpful to suggest your boss attends a course. The Industrial Society runs courses for groups of secretaries to discuss topics such as



Liz Naylor: "My seminars teach confidence and assertiveness and how to seize opportunities"

delegation, improved teamwork and solving problems. Managers attend the final session. So, you could ask for the course on your behalf and sell it as part of your own training. However, we are talking realities here. If your boss thinks things are fine as they are, your chances of him or her agreeing to the course are minimal. It may be down to you alone.

Would you consider spending some time and money of your own? CareerTrack International hold one-day seminars, priced at £11.63, in locations around Britain.

Liz Naylor, who runs the courses, finds that several delegates have taken a day's holiday and paid the fee themselves, seeing this as an investment. She says: "I get annoyed with secretaries who do themselves down and say, 'I'm only... or 'I just...'. If they are not proud of their work how can they expect others to respect them? My seminars teach confidence and assertiveness and I teach people how to seize opportunities."

Ms Naylor also believes in stressing that you are out to save your boss time and that managers do not normally feel threatened if

you handle it properly. "Look at their regular responsibilities and offer to take over the one that is least risky for them to lose."

Among her suggestions are: use initiative. Take a letter to your boss with your suggested reply already attached; learn the financial area. You can gather figures and help to monitor them, learn spreadsheets. There are some user-friendly tutor-

al packages around. Network on behalf of your boss and at the same time raise your own profile. Have coffee or lunch with people from other departments. You will then have contacts when you need them.

• The Industrial Society, Robert Hyde House, Bryanston Square, London W1N 1LN; CareerTrack International, Drayton Road, Newton Longville, Milton Keynes MK17 0DY

Crème 95

The Times Crème 95, the Executive Secretary Show, is at London's Olympia 2 from June 14-16, admission free. It offers senior secretaries, PAs, administrators and office managers advice from experts in all fields of secretarial and office management.

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Damp pitch puts Yorkshire on skids

By IVO TENNANT

HEADINGLEY (Worcestershire won toss): Worcestershire beat Yorkshire by seven wickets

LET US hope that the pitch to be used for the first Test match next week is a considerable improvement on this one. No sooner had Worcestershire won the toss than they had won the match, for the conditions in the morning were far from suitable even for a slogabour. Yorkshire were bowled out for 88, their lowest total in the Benson and Hedges Cup.

Owing to a family bereavement, Keith Boyce, York-

shire's head groundsman, had not overseen the preparation of the pitch. He had left it in the care of his ground staff, who somehow had allowed it to become damp. Come yesterday morning there was scant drying breeze and continual cloud cover. The upshot was movement for the quicker bowlers and considerable turn for the spinners.

By the time the pitch had dried out, it was mid-afternoon and this quarter-final was over. "I might as well have stayed at home and done my gardening," Raymond Illingworth, the chairman of England selectors, said. "It's the same with every match I have seen this season."

He floated the idea of having every groundsman employed under the jurisdiction of the Test and County Cricket Board. There is no masking his frustration this season, so woe betide Yorkshire's ground staff if they do not do something about their covering next week. Worcestershire had nobody fast enough to be dangerous yesterday: indeed, they had no need of a bowler above medium pace. Newport and Haynes gained sufficient movement to have Yorkshire ten for four before a goodly number of the spectators had arrived.

All four batsmen, McGrath, Kellert, Bevan and White, went to catches at the wicket

by Rhodes or at first slip. Moody. Only Bevan played anything that could be construed as a loose shot, in that he attempted to steer his first ball from Haynes to third man.

Blakey took 64 balls to make six runs, not least because he was bemused by the turn Richard Illingworth achieved as soon as he came on. Unwisely venturing down the pitch, Blakey was beaten by one that spun sharply across him. Only Byas made any sort of score (47) and was in any way unlucky to be dismissed. Lampitt, who had dropped a simple chance at cover, now held a splendid reflex catch in his follow-through. York-

shire's last five wickets went down for seven runs. Lampitt finishing with four for 16 and the gold award.

In Worcestershire's innings, Weston went in the second over, leg-before to one Hartley moved into him, and Curtis was nicely taken at second slip by Byas off Robinson. Later, Hick was out to a similarly smart catch, this by Bevan at square leg, also off Robinson, but Moody was not daunted by any bowler. Two sixes off successive overs by Stemp, one straight and the other over extra cover, were the most telling shots of the day. Worcestershire, beaten finalists last year, are in the semi-finals again.

Lancashire have Lloyd to thank as bowlers hold sway

By MICHAEL HENDERSON

OLD TRAFFORD (Lancashire won toss): Lancashire beat Nottinghamshire by six wickets

LANCASHIRE have proved in making three scores upwards of 300 in the Benson and Hedges Cup this season that they are masters of the waltz. Yesterday, in winning a low-scoring game on a dusty pitch, they showed they can do the military two-step.

Although batting was never easy, it looked a far sight more comfortable when they were chasing 202 for victory than when Nottinghamshire were setting their modest target. Graham Lloyd's unbeaten 72, made from 68 balls, was the most significant innings of the day, and carried Lancashire into the semi-finals with 32 balls to spare.

In the group game between the teams on this ground three weeks ago, Lancashire made 353 for seven, the highest total in this competition in a match involving two first-class counties. Gallian and Crawley made hundreds that day, and Nottinghamshire replied with 276 runs of their own. Yesterday, the conditions were less favourable for batsmen on a pitch that Peter Marron first prepared for the tie against Leicestershire in April. Lloyd ended that game with the winning six. This time, it was a coronation or garden tour, his seventh.

It was Lloyd's partnership of 70 in 15 overs for the fourth wicket, with Fairbrother, that tilted the game back to Lancashire after Crawley, sweeping at Afford, had followed Gallian and Atherton back to the pavilion. These fabulous stroke-makers played within themselves, stealing runs rather than smiting them.

Lloyd's nomination as man of the match was unchallengeable, particularly as it was his flat throw, delivered from the mid-wicket boundary, that beat Lewis to the bowler's end as he sought a third run. Lewis, who was unable to bowl because of his persistent groin injury, was two short of a half-century and clearly thought he had made his ground.

Nottinghamshire lacked Lewis's bowling more than Lancashire missed Peter Martin, who was resting an injured thigh. After Wasim withdrew from the attack, the dependable Austin took three of the next five wickets, including the important ones of Robinson and Cairns. Yates, the off-spinner, emphasised the depth of Lancashire's talent with an excellent contribution.

Cairns is an admirably committed cricketer and fully earned Atherton's praise when he bowled. Nottinghamshire could do with his enthusiasm. In the absence of Johnson, their best batsman, there was not much fighting spirit here.

Rain delays captain's fate after decision to bat backfires

Somerset have Russell in a spin

By ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

BRISTOL (Gloucestershire won the toss): Somerset, with eight wickets in hand, need 51 runs to beat Gloucestershire

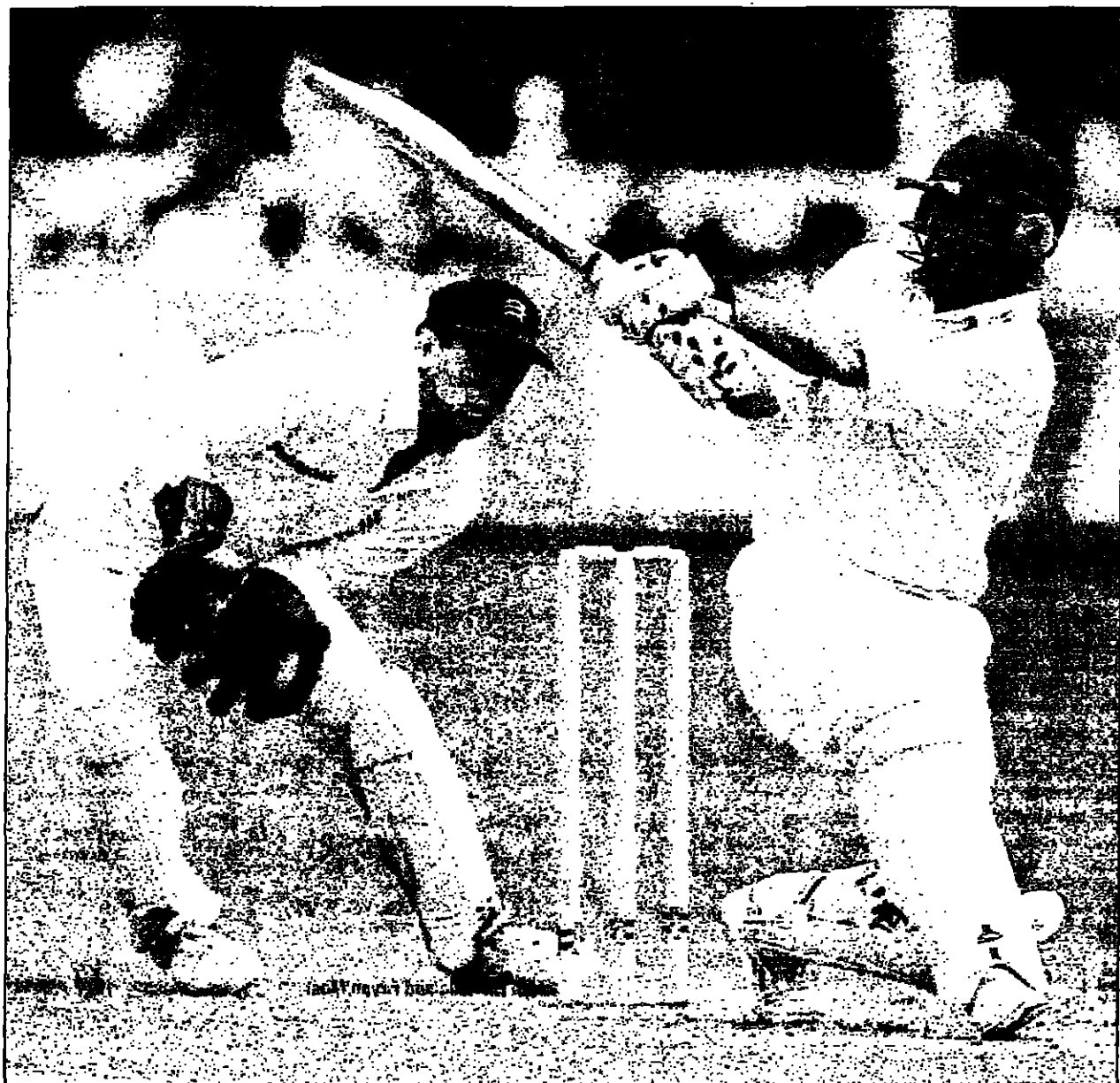
BRISTOL drew its biggest crowd since 1987 yesterday but the curious occasions present saw one-day cricket at its most unsatisfying. The weather was poor, the pitch inappropriately fickle and the batsmen chained by bowling mastery. Worse still, an unfulfilling match dribbled into a second day with Gloucestershire's early-season bubble apparently about to burst against a Somerset team barely able to summon 11 men.

Only in England, where lunch and tea still archaically intrude on limited-overs games designed for a single break and where the spectator remains poorly served by official lethargy in dubious weather, could such farcical sights have occurred.

The umpires brought the teams off in the seventh over of the Somerset innings, due to light drizzle, and they did not resume for 95 minutes. For most of this time, the light was good, rain barely discernible and dozens of schoolboys were playing on the outfield. Then, 75 minutes after the restart, the players trooped off again for tea (at five minutes before six) and, of course, the rain began once more.

Jack Russell had more to worry him than the weather. He has done almost everything right in his early weeks as the Gloucestershire captain, but may have struggled to justify to himself his decision to bat first. After morning rain, and in overcast conditions, seam bowling was inevitably supported and, in Javagal Srinath, Russell had a man who could have won him the game. Perhaps he was taken in by the continued absence of Caddick and van Troost. Somerset's new-ball attack, but his batsmen were first subdued by the replacement seamers and then submitted tamely to spin.

Somerset have followed Middlesex in employing three



Brown, the Middlesex wicketkeeper, watches as Mark Benson sweeps John Embury during the Benson and Hedges Cup quarter-final against Kent at Canterbury yesterday. Benson made 56. Photograph: Julian Herbert

spin bowlers for certain one-day games and if, here, it was as much down to a count of the able-bodied as to any tactical inspiration, it still proved mightily effective. The aggregate bowling analysis for Mustaq Ahmed, Harvey Trump and Jeremy Batty was seven for 51 from 30.4 overs, enough to leave the old-timers shaking their heads and declaring that Gloucestershire never have been any good

against spin.

The first breach had been made by Graham Rose, who is heroically carrying the pace bowling despite a nagging back complaint. Dean Hodgson, feet and brain not cooperating, was out leg-before and, an over later, Monte Lynch thrashed a sharp catch to gully.

Tony Wright survived the early bounce and movement and unseathed his favourite

pull to deposit Ecclestone for six. But the advent of Mustaq saw him off, drawn down the pitch and bowled by the goosy Alayne was well caught behind driving rashly against Andy Hayhurst, but Dawson and Symonds took the total to 90 and looked in no great trouble. No sooner was Dawson deceived in flight by Batty, though, than the innings fell apart. Symonds was sensationally caught on the

square-leg boundary, the first of three to fall while sweeping, and the last six wickets went down for 23 runs.

Russell revived Gloucestershire spirits with two outstanding catches and, at 28 for two, Somerset were tottering. But Marcus Trescothick, who played at air almost a dozen times against Srinath, began to time the ball sweetly and, in better weather, they should go through comfortably today.

West Indies on top as left-handers get it right

By JACK BAILEY

LEICESTER (first day of three): Leicestershire won the toss; the West Indians have scored 389 for five wickets

IT WAS a case of two left-handers for the price of one: Lara went missing, so Keith Arthurson and Shivnarine Chanderpaul upheld the honour of both the West Indians and the cack-handers' club after Richie Richardson had eased himself into some sort of form before falling for 60 with a century in his sights.

Arthurson was the chief beneficiary of an attack that lost its cutting edge during the afternoon. He dealt impressively, and often violently, with most of the bowling, hitting four sixes and 24 fours in his 146.

With Chanderpaul he added 223 in 51 overs. The latter, moving with more measured stride, just failed to reach his century by the end. But, by then, enough had been done to initiate one or two young

Leicestershire bowlers into the destructive nature of West Indians batting on a good pitch. Sherriyar and Clarke are two who will have unhappy memories, although Clarke was unlucky, as a leg-spinner, to be introduced against two left-handers in full flow.

All this in the absence of Lara, called back to Port of Spain on Monday by urgent personal business. He will return in time for the Northamptonshire match, next Saturday. Leicestershire's list of absentees was less impressive, but there were impeccable reasons for absenteeism, including a honeymoon, two strained sides, a bruised hand and a bout of flu.

Initially, the attack looked full of running. The West Indians felt the power of Mills at his most lively on a pitch that rewarded wholehearted fast bowling. It was, though, that trusty old warhorse, Gordon Parsons, who took the only two wickets which did not come from unforced errors while the West Indians stumbled to 723, and then Richardson left, having restored order.

But Mills had his moments, bowling downhill from the Bennett End. During one over to Richardson, then on 33, he had him caught at slip from an instinctive defensive stroke only to hear the cry of "no ball" from umpire Jones. Two balls later, what looked like an inside edge to Nixon sent the whole Leicestershire side up in appeal. Again, the umpire disappointed.

CRICKET SCOREBOARDS

Benson and Hedges Cup Quarter-finals

Gloucestershire v Somerset
BRISTOL (Gloucestershire won toss): Somerset, with eight wickets in hand, need 51 runs to beat Gloucestershire

GLoucestershire	
A J Wright c Richardson b Ross	13
G D Hodgson lbw b Ross	2
M A Lynch c Trump b Ecclestone	2
R D Dawson c and b Batty	9
M W Alayne c Turner b Hayhurst	10
A Symonds c Bowler b Trump	23
*R C Russell c Ecclestone b Batty	7
J Srinath c Bowler b Trump	2
M C Ball c Bowler b Trump	0
M E Cresswell not out	0
A M Smith lbw b Mustaq	0
Extras (R 2, B 2, W 4)	8
Total (48.4 overs)	113

Somerset	
M N Luffwell c Russell b Cooper	7
M R Trescothick not out	26
P D Jordan not out	10
R J Haden not out	9
Extras (W 2)	2
Total (22 wickets, 25 overs)	63

*A N Hayhurst, S C Ecclestone, R J Turner, M R Trescothick, G D Rose, R J Trump and J Haden.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-11, 2-29, 3-30, 4-31, 5-32, 6-33, 7-34, 8-35, 9-36, 10-37, 11-38, 12-39, 13-40, 14-41, 15-42, 16-43, 17-44, 18-45, 19-46, 20-47, 21-48, 22-49, 23-50, 24-51, 25-52, 26-53, 27-54, 28-55, 29-56, 30-57, 31-58, 32-59, 33-60, 34-61, 35-62, 36-63, 37-64, 38-65, 39-66, 40-67, 41-68, 42-69, 43-70, 44-71, 45-72, 46-73, 47-74, 48-75, 49-76, 50-77, 51-78, 52-79, 53-80, 54-81, 55-82, 56-83, 57-84, 58-85, 59-86, 60-87, 61-88, 62-89, 63-90, 64-91, 65-92, 66-93, 67-94, 68-95, 69-96, 70-97, 71-98, 72-99, 73-100, 74-101, 75-102, 76-103, 77-104, 78-105, 79-106, 80-107, 81-108, 82-109, 83-110, 84-111, 85-112, 86-113, 87-114, 88-115, 89-116, 90-117, 91-118, 92-119, 93-120, 94-121, 95-122, 96-123, 97-124, 98-125, 99-126, 100-127, 101-128, 102-129, 103-130, 104-131, 105-132, 106-133, 107-134, 108-135, 109-136, 110-137, 111-138, 112-139, 113-140, 114-141, 115-142, 116-143, 117-144, 118-145, 119-146, 120-147, 121-148, 122-149, 123-150, 124-151, 125-152, 126-153, 127-154, 128-155, 129-156, 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796-823, 797

1. The first step in the process of identifying a problem is to recognize that a problem exists. This involves gathering information about the situation and identifying the specific issue that needs to be addressed.

Croatian's fragile temperament betrays him in defeat at French Open

Ivanisevic falls at first hurdle in familiar style

FROM STUART JONES, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT, IN PARIS

AS MUCH as the first day of the French Open was dominated by recognised figures, the second was taken over by unknowns. Against a backdrop of rolling thunder and intermittent rain, three seeds suffered the ignominy of being eliminated in the first round by qualifiers.

Goran Ivanisevic, whose tempestuous nature matched the conditions, was humbled in straight sets by Mikael Tillström. Natalia Zvereva and Mary Joe Fernandez succumbed to Catalina Cristea and Paola Suarez, who had each previously won only one grand slam match.

Ivanisevic is so erratic that his defeat might have been considered predictable. Nobody, not even he, knows

which of his personalities will step on to the court. When buoyant, he can be irresistible; when down-hearted, he is capable of losing to anyone. His mood changed for the worse yesterday once drizzle interrupted his service game towards the end of the first set. When play resumed, at 5-6 and 30-0, he yielded eight points in a row and appeared determined to leave Roland Garros as soon as was feasible.

Underneath angry clouds and increasingly heavy rain, he did not even bother to attempt to delay his departure. Hurling through the match with reckless abandon, he almost managed to be knocked out before play was suspended for the second time.

At match-point down, he struck another languid forehand, which was adjudged to have landed beyond the baseline. The umpire overruled the call and Tillström raised no objection, but, after the restart, Ivanisevic lasted only another four minutes before going out 7-5, 6-3, 6-4.

"This is the worst loss I have in my life," he mumbled. The appraisal would have been more meaningful if he had not so often uttered the same words, such as in Hamburg three weeks ago. "I didn't hurt him. I didn't do anything. He had a nice day."

Ivanisevic is testing his own powers of explanation in grand slam championships. In the last US and Australian Opens, he has been humiliated in the opening round, losing in straight sets to Markus Zöcke in New York and Carl-Uwe Steeb in Melbourne.

"If I had the chance, I would break all my rackets and stop playing tennis," he lamented. "I won't touch a racket for ten days and then I'll see what I'm going to do." In his present state, he cannot even talk a good game, let alone play one.

He was not alone in suffering temperamental problems yesterday. Carsten Ariens, of Germany, was disqualified after he threw his racket at a linesman during his first-round encounter with Brett Steven, of New Zealand. He had already been warned by the umpire about his behaviour and, when he launched his racket, he and it bade farewell to the tournament for another year.

In contrast, Tillström has been physically damaged. Out for five months in 1993, to recuperate from surgery to correct a twisted ankle, he missed another five months in 1994 when stress fractures were diagnosed in both knees.

Before his enforced absence, the Swede, 23, defeated the seeded Richard Krajicek here last year and took Pete Sampras to four sets in the fourth round. In dismissing Ivanisevic, the No 4 seed, he



Ivanisevic wonders where it all went wrong after losing in Paris yesterday

bridged a gap of 138 places in the rankings.

Cristea, a 19-year-old Romanian, and Suarez, an 18-year-old Argentine, crossed even wider divides in removing the No 10 and No 13 seeds respectively. Fernandez, without offering an excuse, revealed that

she has been ill for a couple of months, having contracted pneumonia and since had a couple of relapses.

The most crushing victory was inflicted by Conchita Martinez. The reigning Wimbledon champion and No 4 seed, she confirmed her status

as one of the favourites by conceding a mere 14 points to Sabine Hack, a German competent enough to have qualified for the Virginia Slims Championship, featuring the top 16 players, last November, who had taken a set off her in last year's quarter-final.

Unhappy Scots give concerns a public airing

FROM MARK SOUSTER IN PRETORIA

SCOTLAND'S frustration at perceived injustices at the rugby union World Cup, which centre principally on money and the drug-testing procedure, split over into public criticism of Rugby World Cup Ltd (RWC), the tournament organisers, yesterday.

Their main concern was the delay in the payment of the second instalment of the £25 a day communication allowance to which all players are entitled on tour. It had been due last Thursday but, when it had not arrived on Monday despite assurances that it would, Duncan Paterson, the team manager, and Bill Hogg, the Scottish Rugby Union (SRU) secretary, withdrew £9,500 in SRU funds from a bank in Pretoria to reimburse the players personally.

Paterson could barely disguise his contempt for the South African Rugby Football Union (SARFU), who are responsible for the distribution of the allowances to all teams during the World Cup and for explanations given which, he said, included problems in calculating the exchange rate.

Yesterday, before Scotland's vital second match in pool D against Tonga, the SRU held a press conference at the team's hotel to voice its anger. Paterson said: "We have had all sorts of excuses but this is totally unacceptable. It did not happen in the last two World Cups. The players are entitled to that money; once again, it is they who have been affected and that is wrong."

Paterson added that Sarfu now owed the SRU the money. "We will be chasing them, although we might need a sawn-off shot gun and a stocking mask," he said.

They were not out of pocket for long, however. RWC admitted to an administrative error which had also affected Wales and Canada, both of whom complained. And, by last night, Edward Griffiths, the Sarfu chief executive, had intervened to ensure that the money was lodged in the appropriate bank account.

Meanwhile, Paterson said that two written complaints had been made to RWC about the drug-testing procedure after matches. "To be accused as soon as you come off the field and stuck away in a room without being allowed to shower or be treated for injury is disgraceful," he said. Tony Stanger and Bryan Redpath

had spent almost two hours producing a sample after the opening match, against Ivory Coast in Rustenburg because they were dehydrated.

However, RWC responded by saying that the programme had been drawn up on International Olympic Committee guidelines and that officials had been to Lausanne to study the procedure at first hand.

These two issues only compounded the Scotland management's misgivings about aspects of the organisation of the tournament, which had also resulted in the team's wives and girlfriends not being allocated tickets for the game in Rustenburg last Friday night. They were eventually seated in an open-air stand with other supporters.

"It certainly wasn't the dress circle, more like the one and nines," Brian Meek, their media liaison officer, said.

If that was not enough, behind-the-scenes relations between the SRU and the

France predictably piled up the points in the pool D match against the Ivory Coast, winning 54-18 in Rustenburg. Thierry Lacroix, the centre, scored 20, but the Ivory Coast, beaten 89-0 by Scotland, at least had the consolation of two tries, from Camara and Soullama.

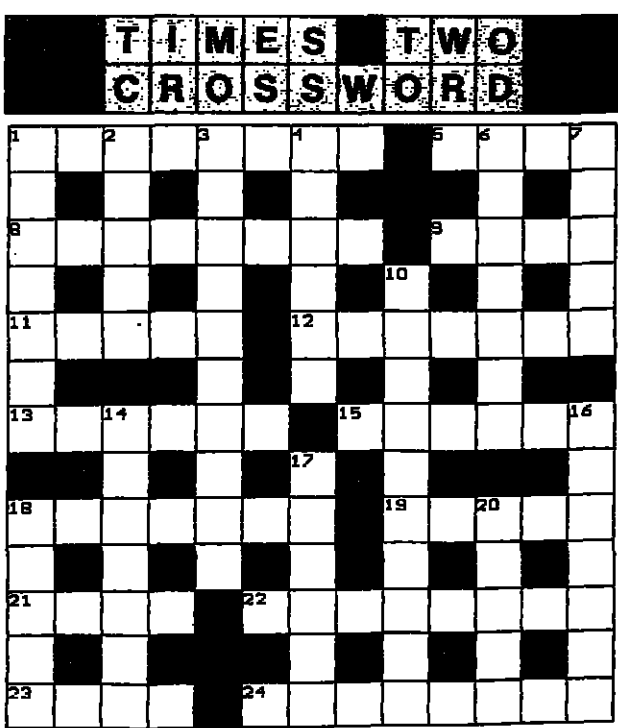
team's sponsors, The Famous Grouse, have also reached a new low. Grouse's last-minute failure to organise a visit by the players to a township outside Pretoria for a coaching clinic with children did nothing for Paterson's humour.

"It would have been wonderful for the game and the children in particular," he said. "Six days ago we were told it was arranged, then it was told the day before it hadn't been. It was very disappointing."

Paterson also believes that the sponsors have hijacked a private players' safari to Botswana next week for their own benefit, and invited television cameras along against his wishes. Not that the travelling media are delighted either. They have been banned from the trip, as have BBC Scotland, although Scottish Television and the French station TVI have been invited to share the company's largesse in the bush.



Tillström celebrates his unexpected first-round victory



- ACROSS**
- 1 Joyfulness (8)
 - 5 OT book: pity (archaic) (4)
 - 8 Matador's pass: cloth (8)
 - 9 Summer solstice month (4)
 - 11 Raised strip of land (5)
 - 12 Eastern circular religious symbol (7)
 - 13 Stabbing weapon (6)
 - 15 Supporter: Quaker (6)
 - 18 Mark softening French C (7)
 - 19 Pang: scurp (5)
 - 21 Opinion: sight (4)
 - 22 Sacking quality (8)
 - 23 Vein of ore (4)
 - 24 Affliction (8)
- DOWN**
- 1 With raised temperature (7)
 - 2 Unnaturally vivid: shocking (5)
 - 3 Poor, neglected thing: a pantomime (10)
 - 4 Yet to be experienced (2,4)
 - 6 Wall in mourning (7)
 - 7 Doglike hunter/scavenger (5)
 - 10 Occurring at rare intervals (10)
 - 14 An unexpected relief (7)
 - 16 (Scottish) schoolmaster (7)
 - 17 Roam (6)
 - 18 Quibble (5)
 - 20 Strange, foreign (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 482

ACROSS: 1 Gorkha 5 Gill 9 Tremble 10 Cohort 11 Prudence 12 Dole 15 Sample 18 Lorraine 20 Double 22 Tadpole 23 Pawn 24 Rebate

DOWN: 2 Uptown 3 Knee-deep 4 Alban 6 Itch 7 Laurel 8 Rodeo 13 Catcomb 14 Dele 16 Around 17 Infest 19 Rider 21 Blow

CROSSWORD BOOKS: The Times Crossword - Books 1 to 13 £4.99 each. Books 14 to 19 £4.99 each. The Times Two Crosswords - Books 1 & 2 £5.99 each. Books 3 to 7 £4.99 each. The Times Jumbo Crossword - Book 1 £5.99 each. Concise Book 1 £3.99. **SUNDAY TIMES CROSSWORDS:** The Sunday Times Crossword - Book 1 £4.99. Books 10 to 13 £4.99 each. The Sunday Times Concise Crossword - Book 1 to 3 £4.99 each. Book 4 £3.99. **COMPUTER CROSSWORDS:** For IBM PC and Acorn Archimedes range: 34 titles £4.99 each. Send SAE for details. Prices inc. p&p. No. sent cheques with order payable to Akoma Ltd, 51 Manor Lane, London SE11 5JW. Delivery in 8 days. Tel 0181-852 4573 (24 hrs). No credit cards.

All-round Ealham leads Kent into semi-finals

BY SIMON WILDE

CANTERBURY (Kent won the toss): Kent beat Middlesex by 26 runs

KENT made harder work of reaching the Benson and Hedges Cup semi-finals than they might have done yesterday but, in the end, they won easily enough. Though they themselves collapsed badly after Ward and Benson had shared their fifth successive century opening partnership, losing nine wickets for 117 runs, it was nothing to the way that Middlesex folded before the task of making 68 from their final seven overs.

To a flurry of wickets and the ever-increasing cheers of a crowd of 5,000 at the St Lawrence ground, the visitors were unable to accelerate towards a target of 251. Headley took three of the last five wickets to fall, but it was Mark Ealham, whose father was the last man to lead the county to a trophy in 1978, who swung the match with bat and ball.

Gaunt's decision to open with Felham and Pooley and play himself in the middle order paid off, although it might not have done. Felham was dropped twice by Cowdrey at second slip in McCague's second over and went on to make 37 out of an opening stand of 70 in 19 overs. In fact, McCague and Headley also failed to make a breakthrough when they returned after tea and it needed Fleming and Ealham to apply a much-needed break.

Ealham dispatched Pooley for 47 and Ramprakash for 34 and both departures, to wild heaves, spoke of frustration. A fully-fledged Gaunt might have been equal to the task of

conjuring 130 from the final 20 overs, but not one carrying a groin strain. He entered with a runner but was not to help matters by setting off for the occasional run. He prospered for a while on cuts and snicks, he had just lost Carr, to a catch in the deep, when he was bowled by Headley.

In the morning, when Ward and Benson were together, Middlesex appeared at a loss as to what to do next. Nothing they tried worked and each batsman played no more than one stroke that might, on another day, have gone to hand. Neither Fraser nor Emburey looked worth the England places they think they deserve.

SCOREBOARD	
KENT	
T R Ward c Nash b Felham	84
M R Benson c Pooley b Felham	56
M R Headley c Benson b Fraser	34
P A O'Shea c Brown b Nash	9
G H Cowdrey c Brown b Fraser	14
M A Ealham run out	30
M J Pooley c Brown b Fraser	10
M J McCague not out	5
D W Headley not out	17
Extras (lb 12, w 6, nb 4)	22
Total (64 overs)	250
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-132, 2-132, 3-146, 4-167, 5-182, 6-198, 7-228, 8-222, 9-221	
MIDDLESEX	
M A Felham c Pooley b O'Shea	37
J C Pooley c Walker b Ealham	47
M R Headley c Benson b Fraser	34
M W Gaunt b Headley	20
J D Carr c Walker b Fleming	16
R N Brown c Ealham b McCague	16
P N Westley b Headley	17
D J Nash c Marsh b Fleming	8
R L Johnson c Marsh b Headley	0
J E Emburey not out	3
A R C Fraser b Fleming	7
Extras (lb 13, w 6)	19
Total (64.4 overs)	224
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-70, 2-120, 3-133, 4-167, 5-182, 6-198, 7-228, 8-222, 9-221	
BOWLING: McCague 11-1-40-1; Headley 11-1-47-3; Ealham 11-2-38-2; Fleming 10-4-41-3; O'Shea 4-0-18-1; Patel 7-0-27-0	
Gold award: M A Ealham	
Umpires: M O Bird and M J Kitchen	



Douce: stable

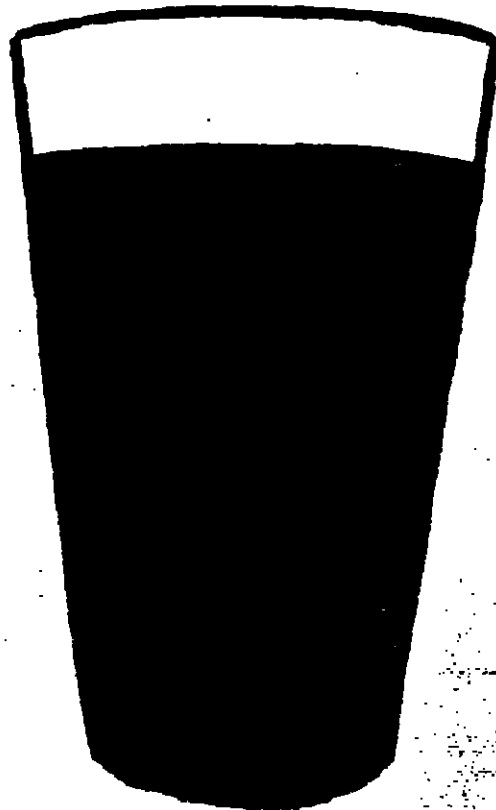
Douce has operation after fall

STEVE DOUCE, seven times the national cyclo-cross champion, was said to be in a "poorly but stable" condition yesterday after a five-hour operation on face and head injuries he sustained while mountain-bike racing on Sunday (David Powell writes). Douce was taken to Middlesbrough General Hospital after falling head-first onto a rock.

Douce, 31, was due to have been among the riders for a new city-centre cycling series that begins in York today. The eight-race grand prix is the first series in Britain since 1992, when the recession discouraged team sponsors. City-centre cycling was popular in the Eighties and returns funded by the city councils which are hosting the races, and by circuit advertisers. Sky Television coverage has been pivotal in tempting the councils and sponsors.

"For the riders it is critical," Alan Rushton, of Sport for Television, the organisers of the series, said. "When they get on television they can obtain team sponsorship. Take television away and it becomes an uphill battle."

Like the Japanese, the Irish believe in mental preparation for combat.



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